



North Somerset Black and Minority Ethnic Forum Project

The BME Population of North Somerset

A Scoping Report
Incorporating the Migrant Worker Scoping Report June 2006

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Supported by



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Introduction

1.1 The whole world is on the move. The reasons are many and varied, and apart from the large-scale natural and man-made causes for this phenomenon, people are choosing to emigrate for all manner of personal reasons, including on the grounds of health, economics, family ties, and romance.

1.2 Just as other nationalities come over and sometimes settle here, statistics show that a considerable number of UK citizens move to other countries every year and some times settle there. The problem is that this fact is hardly mentioned at best, and at worst, when mentioned it is drowned out by anxieties, mostly exaggerated, about immigration in general.

1.3 The international competitive-edge business case, and country specific economic and sociological imperatives which make some of this emigration necessary, if not critical, is often smothered or dismissed outright.

1.4 The debate on issues around immigration will undoubtedly go on. The mapping exercise on which this report is based, however, is not mainly about the conflicting arguments concerning who should be or not be here and why, (although this is touched on), but rather about an effort to assist in the process of gathering and assembling information about who lives and/or works here in North Somerset and whether their needs are being met. It is an attempt to assemble substantial data about the landscape of the Black Minority Ethnic (BME) communities in North Somerset.

1.5 The report highlights the role that such knowledge should play in service planning, commissioning, provision, and service delivery by the statutory agencies. The report's strength as a scoping exercise is that it draws on SREC's links and particular involvement with the BME communities, providing us with a good 'on the ground' idea of the size, characteristics, and needs of the BME population in North Somerset as communicated to SREC in various ways. It is our view that the importance of such data in facilitating fairer and more equitable service provision for all cannot be over emphasised, and there is quite a lot of relevant information contained in this report. But we also freely accept that there are still gaps in that knowledge.

1.6 Even so, the very nature of this type of information, however
inexhaustive, makes a valuable contribution towards efforts to get 'the real'

picture. For example, it makes it possible to note certain particular increases or changes in the local demographics. Unfortunately that useful information could be misrepresented and used for detriment. That would be regrettable.

1.7 Sensationalising is especially tempting where the increases are expressed in percentages. For example, a change from 2 to 4 may be described as a 100% increase. In fact it would only be a real increase of 2 in number with less drama. It is important to guard against anxiety-causing statements and interpretations that would detract from the real value of this work.

2. Background

2.1 This scoping exercise is one of the five outcomes of the North Somerset BME Forum Project '... to produce baseline research information concerning the ethnic composition and the needs of the BME population in North Somerset'.

2.2 The project started in 2006 when SREC successfully bid to the Big Lottery to start a BME Forum project for North Somerset. Additional funding support was successfully sought from Quartet Community Foundation's Fair Share Trust for this work. Other outcomes included: providing support, training, capacity building, casework, signposting services and the development of existing BME individuals into self-help community groups and the establishment of a Forum and a Steering Committee (see p.7).

2.3 The Forum Project employed two staff. The staff, with the help and support of the North Somerset Project, a partnership arrangement between Somerset Racial Equality Council (SREC), North Somerset Council, Avon and Somerset Constabulary, and the North Somerset PCT, carried out the scoping exercise.

3. Methodology

3.1 This is not a census model report. Neither is it a survey. It has been described as a scoping report.

3.2 Scoping information was gathered through the analysis of available secondary data from a variety of sources, such as the Police, North Somerset PCT, North Somerset Council, North Somerset Citizens Advice Bureau, Ethnic Minority Achievement Service, Weston College, and from other sources such as the TUC, and contacts that the project has made. Comparisons were made with relevant information from regional and neighbouring administrative areas (see p.13).

3.3 There has always been a small but significant BME population in North Somerset even long before the unitary authority came into being, including those who were displaced and ended up settling in North Somerset after the second World War (see pp.8 , 9). These are acknowledged; but the project also sought out newly established, and newly arrived BME individuals and groups for community links and acknowledgement in this report.

3.4 The growth in worldwide migration and the enlargement of the European Union has seen an increasing diverse range of movement from Central and Eastern Europe and beyond into Britain. This movement is reflected, to some extent, in North Somerset (see pp12,13.). Data with reference to some groups have been collected from various sources such as National Insurance Number to Overseas Nationals (NINO), English as an Additional Language (EAL) sources and TUC figures. The difficulties in capturing the whole picture in this way is widely accepted.

3.5 Baseline information from the 2001 Population Census has been used for comparison in this document (see pp9,10). However, there is a view that the 2001 Census was out of date soon after publication; and that the BME population in North Somerset continues to grow steadily. Mid-term estimates from the Office of National Statistics have therefore also been used and projections made.

4. Key Observations and Recommendations

4.1 There was a near 90% increase between 1991 and 2001 of the non-white population, and a further 84% increase between 2001 and 2004. **It would be feasible in planning and decision-making, to consider that, the Ethnic Minorities population would have at least doubled since 2001, and that it is likely to double again. To achieve community cohesion, it is critical that the Partners of the North Somerset Partnership in particular agree a joint Action Plan to manage the changes in demographics.**

4.2 It is also very likely that the picture would be quite changeable for a while, and therefore **an infrastructural arrangement from the North Somerset Partnership to ensure an update of this work annually would assist effective and equitable planning and service provision. This should include a twice yearly 'data owners' meeting to discuss more anecdotal evidence of community issues.**

4.3 The BME population of North Somerset was 3.26 (6,143) per cent out of a total population of 188,564 in 2001. This figure rose by 1.50 per cent to 4.76 (9,200) per cent out of 193,200 in 2004. There is a view that the Census undercounted the numbers because it would have been almost impossible for the Census to pick up the transient migrant workforce (see p10). Over reliance on only the census data for the planning of service provision could disadvantage certain individuals or groups. **Commissioners and Service Providers should be especially vigilant about this risk, and take effective steps to address it. Resourcing engagement models which offer a credible connection with the communities, and which then provides a window into the lives of the seldom heard would provide a more complete and a more local picture.**

4.4 There is also a view that identifying the real numbers of migrant workers in the UK will remain haphazard as long as there are no problem-free methods of gathering the data. **Every effort should nevertheless be made to persevere with gathering what data there is, to get closer to the true demographic changes. Such information gathered and fed into updates of this report should inform impact assessments and consultations to ensure that they reflect current information on the BME communities.**

4.5 North Somerset should investigate the possibility of standardising the combination of the English as an Additional Language (EAL) and the National Insurance Number Registration to Overseas Nationals (NINO) methods as their adopted method of gathering data. This is because the combination provides a more accurate picture than each of the methods do on its own, but doesn't complicate it.

4.6 There is under reporting of hate crime, and there are plans to address this. General crime is down, but of the hate crimes reported, the majority (86%) were perceived to be motivated by race difference, followed by homophobic offences and religion based offences. **Race issues remain of concern to most BME individuals and groups. It is important not to lose focus on this local reality even as due attention is given to the wider equality agenda.**

4.7 There haven't been the resources to undertake detailed research or surveys in specific service areas for the purposes of this report. **It is recommended that specific detailed work is commissioned to get even closer to the real picture in service areas where information is not readily available, or where there is resistance to volunteer information. Efforts must be made to explore creative and sustainable ways of engagement that would help in that process.**

- 4.8 The local population is relatively older, and there is anecdotal evidence of genuinely felt anxiety about a lot of the myths and emotive language that is used with reference to non - British migration. **It is important that this is positively addressed through community cohesion programmes and other initiatives.**

STATEMENT OF INTENT

North Somerset Council, Avon and Somerset Police, North Somerset Primary Care Trust, and Somerset Racial Equality Council, are committed to working in partnership to develop a Joint Action Plan to address the issues raised in this report, The BME Population of North Somerset - A Scoping Report. The plan will be published in July 2008 and form part of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment for the district. The actions included will be a combination of joint partnership actions and actions specific to our own organisations.

Within the Action Plan we commit to the following:

- Engage and involve the BME population in the development plan.
- Raise awareness of the changing population of North Somerset so that services make adequate provision for our communities.
- Take this opportunity to positively promote the advantages of diversity and equality, and celebrate them in North Somerset.

INTRODUCTION

In January 2006 a new project was launched by Somerset Racial Equality Council (SREC), funded by the Big Lottery, to reach out to and support the Black and Minority Ethnic population in North Somerset. An important part of the project's work was to establish a more up to date picture of the size, distribution and needs of the ethnic minority population, so that their views could be articulated, their voices heard and their needs considered.

This report presents the accumulation of information achieved to date. It is **not** a census giving precise numbers of minority ethnic individuals in North Somerset - this would require a substantial taskforce dedicated solely to that end - but rather a collation of information from a range of sources, including the direct work of the project, concerning the minority ethnic individuals and communities that live and work in North Somerset. The mapping work is ongoing and in that sense the report is of work in progress. However it will hopefully give sufficient information to be useful to those needing to plan for services by indicating trends and also lay to rest once and for all the "we don't have any in North Somerset" attitude which has existed in some quarters in the past.

Aim

The aim of the report is to give a more accurate picture of the current BME population in North Somerset which can inform organisations, agencies and individuals.

Methodology

The information in this report has been gathered in various ways:

- By analysing secondary data
- By collecting information from a variety of sources such as Citizens Advice Bureau, employers, North Somerset Council, Weston College, Ethnic Minority Achievement Service, Primary Care Trust
- By direct contact and involvement of the project with individuals and groups

Definition

The term 'Black and Minority Ethnic' (BME) is used to mean any individuals who identify their ethnic origin to be other than White British and therefore includes people who would be listed in the census as 'White Other' and 'White Irish' as well as those from non-white backgrounds. The term 'Non-White' is used to mean all those who identify their ethnic origin to be other than 'White British', 'White Irish' or 'White Other'.

BACKGROUND

The Project

The North Somerset Black and Minority Ethnic Forum Project began in January 2006 following a successful bid by the North Somerset Race Equality Officer to the Big Lottery. As a result two-year funding was given to Somerset Racial Equality Council to employ one full-time and one part-time worker in the North Somerset area.

The project was set up with a range of tasks:

- To produce baseline research information concerning the ethnic composition and the needs of the BME population in North Somerset
- To provide support, training and capacity building for existing BME groups
- To support and enable the development of new BME groups
- To provide a casework/signposting service to BME individuals
- To establish a BME Forum and Steering Committee

This report concentrates on the first of these tasks and contains the distillation of information gathered over the past two years.

Purpose

There had been a traditional view in North Somerset, as in many other rural areas, that there was no significant BME population. In so far as there was any truth in the assumption, it did mean that those BME individuals who were in North Somerset were in danger of greater isolation and marginalisation. However there is growing evidence, as contained in this report, that the minority ethnic population of North Somerset has increased substantially and that the 2001 census figures - showing a total figure of 3.26% including 'white other' - are considerably out of date. As identified by SREC's first Race Equality Officer in North Somerset shortly after coming into post, "in the past these figures have been used to excuse a lack of effort to seek out or attempt to meet the needs of existing BME groups and individuals."¹

Mapping

The project has been collecting data and information regarding the BME population from the outset, both from its own direct contacts and from a variety of other sources. These include Education, Adult Social Services and Housing, Weston College, Police, Primary Care Trust, Voluntary Action North Somerset, Citizens Advice Bureau, Victim Support, Support Against Racist Incidents, Ethnic Minority Achievement Service, Weston Hospital, Residential and Nursing Homes, Age Concern, Connexions, employers and other voluntary and statutory bodies.

There has been a significant if small minority ethnic population in North Somerset since long before the Unitary Authority came into being including people who were displaced and settled after the second world war, an established Greek Cypriot community and people of Bangladeshi and Chinese origin. There has also been a small Gypsy and Traveller presence.

More recently, with a growth in worldwide migration and the enlargement of the European Union, we have seen an increasingly diverse range of movement in Britain as a whole which has been reflected in North Somerset. While this Authority area has been minimally affected by settling of refugees or asylum seekers (who are dispersed by the Government to particular areas of the country, North Somerset not being one of those) there has been a substantial increase in the numbers of migrant workers.

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

Census

The latest official figures for numbers of people from ethnic minority backgrounds in North Somerset come from the 2001 Census which shows a total of 3.26% (6,143 people out of 188,564). Of these 0.61% (1,149 individuals) were White Irish and 1.27% (2,389) 'Other White', which would include people from central and eastern Europe. The non-White minority ethnic population totalled 2,609 or 1.38%. Table 1 gives the numbers and percentages by the ethnic categories used in the 2001 census:

Table 1

Category	%	Number
White: British	96.74	182,417
White: Irish	0.61	1,149
White: Other White	1.27	2,389
TOTAL WHITE	98.62	185,955
Mixed: White and Black Caribbean	0.17	323
Mixed: White and Black African	0.06	111
Mixed: White and Asian	0.19	352
Mixed: Other Mixed	0.15	281
TOTAL MIXED	0.57	1,067
Asian or Asian British: Indian	0.16	297
Asian or Asian British: Pakistani	0.04	72
Asian or Asian British: Bangladeshi	0.09	174
Asian or Asian British: Other Asian	0.06	104
TOTAL ASIAN OR ASIAN BRITISH	0.35	647
Black or Black British: Caribbean	0.05	98
Black or Black British: African	0.04	81
Black or Black British: Other Black	0.02	45
TOTAL BLACK OR BLACK BRITISH	0.11	224
Chinese or other ethnic group: Chinese	0.22	420
Chinese or other ethnic group: Other ethnic group	0.13	251
TOTAL CHINESE OR OTHER	0.35	671
TOTAL BME	3.26	6147
TOTAL	100.00	188,564

Source

: 2001 Census Crown Copyright

As a measure of the current BME population in North Somerset these figures are considered to be substantially out of date. The census figures themselves may well have undercounted the numbers as they record the established and settled members of the BME population but are less likely to pick up the more transient migrant workforce. BME individuals are also possibly more likely than the 'host' population to be wary of identifying themselves for a range of reasons.

Post-Census

More significantly it is now some eight years since the census was carried out and there has been a substantial increase in migration worldwide. The Office of National Statistics has produced experimental mid-term estimates of changes which suggest a considerable increase in numbers of people of BME background by 2004. The table below gives the estimates by the same ethnic categories,

with percentage comparisons between 2001 and 2004, showing a 46% increase in the BME population as a whole and a 55% increase in the non-white population.

Table 2 Experimental mid-term estimates: 2004 Office of National Statistics

Category	2004	% '04	% '01
White: British	184,000	95.23	96.74
White: Irish	1300	0.67	0.61
White: Other White	3000	1.55	1.27
TOTAL WHITE	188,300	97.46	98.62
Mixed: White and Black Caribbean	500	0.26	0.17
Mixed: White and Black African	200	0.1	0.06
Mixed: White and Asian	500	0.26	0.19
Mixed: Other Mixed	400	0.2	0.15
TOTAL MIXED	1600	0.82	0.57
Asian or Asian British: Indian	700	0.36	0.16
Asian or Asian British: Pakistani	300	0.16	0.04
Asian or Asian British: Bangladeshi	200	0.1	0.09
Asian or Asian British: Other Asian	200	0.1	0.06
TOTAL ASIAN OR ASIAN BRITISH	1400	0.72	0.35
Black or Black British: Caribbean	300	0.16	0.05
Black or Black British: African	400	0.2	0.04
Black or Black British: Other Black	100	0.05	0.02
TOTAL BLACK OR BLACK BRITISH	800	0.41	0.11
Chinese or other ethnic group: Chinese	600	0.62	0.22
Chinese or other ethnic group: Other ethnic group	500	0.26	0.13
TOTAL CHINESE OR OTHER	1100	0.57	0.35
TOTAL BME	9200	4.76	3.26
TOTAL	193,200		

The expansion of the European Union, with the accession of 10 countries in 2004 and another 2 in 2007, has had a further substantial impact on numbers of people from ethnic minorities living and working in North Somerset. There is a range of statistical information regarding numbers of migrant workers, children in schools for whom English is an additional language and numbers of adults attending English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) courses. Where this information is comparative over a period of time it is particularly helpful. While this does not provide definitive evidence regarding the ethnic minority population, it does give a picture which tends to reflect the perception of anyone walking down the High Street of a North Somerset town that there is an increasingly diverse mix of people living and working in the area.

Migrant Workers

There has been much discussion in the national and local media concerning migrant workers and the numbers of people coming to Britain to find work. Definitions vary as described in a University of Exeter report concerning the South West: "The terms 'migrant' and 'migrant worker' are defined in many ways depending on the data source being used. The Home Office defines migrants as all those who were born outside the UK. The foreign-born population is very diverse, including (amongst the working age group) people from elsewhere in the EU who are not subject to immigration controls, those from the Indian sub-continent, Africa and the Americas. Some migrants have been living in the UK for many years, and of this group nearly half have acquired British citizenship. *The majority of migrants are white, and the majority of ethnic minorities are not migrants as they were born in the UK.*"²

Attached to this report is an initial scoping exercise which was undertaken by SREC's Race Equality Officer in 2006 which looked at the issues surrounding migrant workers. "Information from employers and agencies was insufficient to clarify the number of migrant workers in North Somerset (but) they were able to give a flavour of the range of minority groups that migrant workers belong to. All of the data that was contributed to this exercise shows that the migrant worker population in this unitary authority area includes:

Bulgarians, Chinese, Columbians, Czechs, Estonians, Filipinos, Ghanaians, Indians, Italians, Latvians, Lithuanians, Mauritians, Polish, Portuguese, Romanians, Russians, Slovenians, South Africans, Spanish, Thais, Zimbabweans."³ This is by no means an exhaustive list and from our own contacts we could add Brazilians, Cameroonians, Iraqis, Jordanians, Nigerians, Ukrainians and more. Indeed, as noted below, the Ethnic Minority Achievement Service (EMAS) has been working in North Somerset schools with speakers of 49 languages in the past year.

It is well recognised that currently there are not accurate figures regarding the numbers and geographical location of migrant workers. The Office of National Statistics states that "it has long been recognised that international migration is one of the most difficult components of population change to measure accurately. Large numbers of people travel into and out of the UK every year although migration numbers can be very different between one part of the country and another. There is no single, comprehensive source which can provide the information, at national and local levels, that is required for statistical purposes."⁴

A report to the South West Local Government Association Multi-Agency Migrant Worker Group in 2007 reinforces this point by stating that "estimating the number of migrant workers within areas of the UK has proven to be

extremely difficult given the lack of any problem-free data sets and the fact that the migrant population has increased considerably since the first stage of EU enlargement in Spring 2004, three years after the last census".⁵

The report goes on to give comparative figures both for pupils who speak English as an Additional Language (EAL) and for National Insurance Number Registrations to Overseas Nationals (NINO). While there are caveats regarding both sets of figures - the NINOs do not provide estimates of migrant families while the school data gives numbers of children only and not adults - put together they provide a more accurate picture than they do on their own.

Interestingly for both sets of figures North Somerset has the second highest percentage increase over this period of time in the South West as a whole. While any conclusions from this need to be treated with appropriate caution, it does seem to support the more anecdotal evidence of increases in the BME population. The increase in the number of children suggests an increase in the number of households rather than just individuals.

The table below gives comparative figures of pupils for whom English is an additional language for all South West Local Authorities between 2004 and 2006. In North Somerset the figures suggest an 86.5% increase in this period, implying a substantial rise in the number of BME households in the area over this time. This is the second largest increase in the South West, next only to Somerset. Given that Somerset is a neighbouring substantially rural authority it is likely that similar patterns would be evident.

Table 3 EAL Pupils in South West Schools by Local Authority 2004-2006

	2004†			2005			2006			% Growth 04-06
	EAL	Total Pupils*	%†	EAL	Total Pupils*	%†	EAL	Total Pupils*	%†	
Bath and North East Somerset	400	22,900	1.7	361	22,960	1.6	383	22,830	1.7	-4.3
Bournemouth	700	19,200	3.6	741	19,000	3.9	922	18,800	4.9	31.7
Bristol, City of	2,800	40,100	7.0	3,099	40,330	7.7	3,515	39,290	8.9	51.1
Cornwall	400	66,800	0.6	356	66,450	0.5	447	65,790	0.7	11.8
Devon	800	89,100	0.9	847	88,680	1.0	961	88,300	1.1	20.1
Dorset	400	45,600	0.9	421	51,440	0.8	525	51,090	1.0	31.3
Gloucestershire	1,600	79,000	2.0	1,581	79,100	2.0	1,718	78,380	2.2	7.4
North Somerset	200	#15,900	1.3	303	25,620	1.2	373	25,630	1.5	86.5
Plymouth	800	35,700	2.2	730	35,360	2.1	794	34,620	2.3	-0.8
Poole	200	17,800	1.1	280	17,660	1.6	328	17,670	1.9	64.0
Somerset	400	65,400	0.6	600	65,100	0.9	830	64,370	1.3	107.5
South Gloucestershire	700	36,500	1.9	710	36,350	2.0	802	36,130	2.2	14.6
Swindon	1,400	26,000	5.4	1,536	25,630	6.0	1,915	25,770	7.4	51.1
Torbay	300	17,500	1.7	266	17,440	1.5	225	17,340	1.3	-25.0
Wiltshire	800	59,800	1.3	857	59,950	1.4	1,027	59,930	1.7	28.4
South West	11,600	637,700	1.8	12,700	643,200	2	14,770	646,280	2.3	27.3

Source: Department for Education and Skills Cited in ⁵

*the total number of pupils in primary and secondary school of compulsory school age and above

†the percentage of total pupils who are classed as EAL

‡2004 figures are from provisional datasets, all other figures are from final datasets

This figure is accurately quoted from the document, but would seem to be an error given the figures for subsequent years. However it does not affect the suggested increase of 86.5% which is calculated from the EAL totals

When these figures are compared with the figures for NINOs the evidence is reinforced (see table 4 below). National Insurance number registrations by overseas nationals are estimated to have increased in North Somerset over a similar period by nearly 200%, again the second largest in the South West next to Cornwall and nearly 5 times that of the South West as a whole.

Table 4 National Insurance Number Registrations to Overseas Nationals 2003/4 - 2005/6

	2003-04	2005-06*	Change03-06 NINO	Change03-06(%) NINO
Bath and North				
East Somerset	800	1910	1110	141.1
Bournemouth	1305	3170	1865	142.9
Bristol, City of	3320	6920	3600	108.4
Cornwall	815	3400	2585	317.2
Devon	1415	3580	2165	153
Dorset	605	1435	830	137.2
Gloucestershire	1460	4100	2640	180.8
North Somerset	425	1270	845	198.8
Plymouth	750	1740	990	132
Poole	375	860	485	129.3
Somerset	1255	3175	1920	153
South Gloucestershire	655	1325	670	102.3
Swindon	1180	2280	1100	93.2
Torbay	365	945	580	158.9
Wiltshire	1110	2380	1270	114.4
South West	15835	38490	21545	41.9

Source: TUC Presentation to the Learning Theme cited in ²

*Projections

While Somerset shows a smaller increase at 153%, the two District Councils within Somerset which border on North Somerset, Sedgemoor and Mendip, each have even higher increases at 243% and 211% respectively, as quoted in the report "Migrant Workers in Somerset".⁶ This would suggest that these particular areas have similar experiences to those of North Somerset.

Neighbouring Authorities

Considerable analysis has been undertaken by Somerset County Council concerning ethnic data and migrant workers, and a number of reports have been produced which are helpful in giving a clearer picture of what is happening in the area. While caution needs to be used in applying any findings directly to North Somerset, there are considerable similarities between the Authorities and it would be sensible to take the experiences of this neighbouring Authority into account when looking at the situation in North Somerset. Three reports particularly are useful in understanding what may be happening in our area: "Ethnicity in Somerset - Key Figures and Analysis from the 2001 Census",

"Ethnicity in Somerset - Update (August 2006)" and "Migrant Workers in Somerset - September 2006".⁷

The first of these reports analyses the figures from the 2001 census, and shows a remarkably similar pattern to the figures for North Somerset, with just over 97% White British in Somerset compared with just under 97% in North Somerset. Given these similarities it is worth taking note of the changes which have been documented in subsequent reports as they give an indication of what may have been happening in North Somerset.

The "Ethnicity in Somerset - Update (August 2006)" report finds that "Somerset's BME population has increased from 2.93% in 2001 to 4.35% in 2004", while the "non-white population has increased from 1.2% to 2.19% over the same period" after analysing the experimental mid-year estimates of the ethnicity of the population in local areas produced by the Office of National Statistics. As already noted above, the "Migrant Workers in Somerset" report contains useful comparative information regarding the two neighbouring District Councils which can add to our understanding.

Education

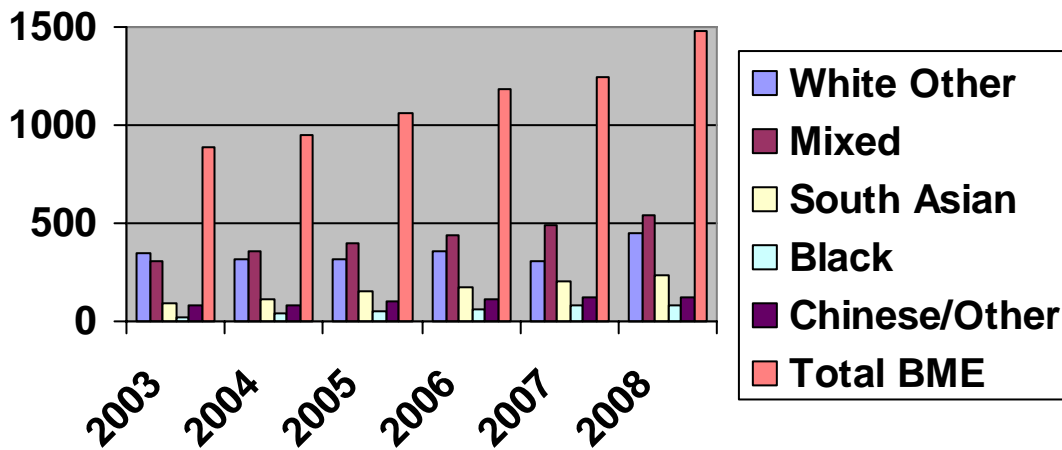
North Somerset Schools

The effects of an increase in migration have been felt in schools in North Somerset. For example one secondary school in Weston had 3 children with limited English language skills in its support unit in 2005/06 increasing to 16 in 2006/07. Overall the figures for school students of BME origin have increased considerably between 2003 and 2008 as shown in appendix 2. The table uses the 2001 census categories.

The number where information is not obtained is high initially at 4937, but drops to only 66 by 2008. Refusal to give information has dropped slightly from 307 in 2003 to 288 in 2008. The most recent figures are therefore likely to give the most accurate picture.

Surprisingly the 'Other White' figure drops in 2007. Given evidence elsewhere regarding migration from new EU countries this would have been expected to rise (if only slightly as we know that the majority of arrivals are single, without dependants). A possible reason for the fall could be the number of refusals to give ethnic origin, which rose from 234 in 2006 to 461 in 2007. This also coincided with some more detailed questions regarding ethnic origin and nationality which may have affected willingness to provide the information. The number of 'Other White' students rises sharply in 2008 when the number of refusals drops down to 288 and there are very few not stated. The chart below shows the ethnic breakdown of pupils by broad category from 2003 - 2008.

**Chart 1 North Somerset Schools
Pupils by Ethnicity 2003-2008**



Leaving aside those where we do not know ethnicity, we see an increase in pupils of BME origin from 4.05% in 2003 to 5.32% in 2008, or from 3.16% to 5.25% if we take them as percentages of the overall total including 'not knowns'. The percentage increase between 2003 and 2008 in various ethnic categories is as follows:

White Other	31%
Dual Heritage (Mixed)	76%
Asian	141%
Black	265%
Chinese	57%

As can be seen the largest percentage increase is in the number of Black pupils, from 23 to 84. There is an even bigger percentage increase of 410% if we just take the numbers for Black African pupils - from 10 to 51 - though it should be noted we are dealing with very small numbers overall. An interesting figure is the number of children of dual heritage in our schools, which shows a steady rise from 309 in 2003 to 544 in 2008, suggesting an increase in the number of mixed race relationships in North Somerset.

Ethnic Minority Achievement Service

The Ethnic Minority Achievement Service works in North Somerset schools, supporting children with language and other needs associated with their backgrounds and experiences, and working with the schools to help meet these needs. EMAS is able to give detailed information regarding numbers of BME children with whom they work.

In her report "Work with North Somerset LA September 2005 - July 2006", Judith Longstreth states that over this period the pupils worked with spoke a total of 49 languages⁸, compared with 48 the previous year. She says "it is to be noted that 12 of the above languages are new in comparison to the previous list, thus exemplifying considerable pupil mobility in and out of the area. This trend was noted last year as well, where 26 of the 45 languages of referred pupils differed from those reported in December 2003 (when there were 29 reported languages)."⁹

The report gives some comparative data between North Somerset, Bath and North East Somerset (BANES) and South Gloucestershire from 2004-5 to 2005-6 which is summarised in the table below:

Table 5

Total Schools and Pupils Supported by EMAS in Bath and North East Somerset, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire: September '04 - July '06

	Sept '04 - July '05			Sept '05 - July '06			% Total Pupil Change
	Total Schools	Total Pupils	New Pupils	Total Schools	Total Pupils	New Pupils	
Bath and North East Somerset	59	192	86	67	199	87	4%
North Somerset	63	156	84	110	224	124	44%
South Gloucestershire	108	215	100	151	266	132	24%

These figures reinforce the picture already gained from Table 3 above of a considerable increase in numbers of BME children - and therefore of BME households - in North Somerset in recent years. The total figures for North Somerset in 2005-06 overtake those of BANES and the increase is 44% compared with 24% in South Gloucestershire and 4% in BANES.

Further evidence of the levels of increase are shown in a comparative table between 2001-2 and 2005-6 for North Somerset which indicates a 245% increase in the numbers of children worked with over this period.

Table 6 Pupils supported by EMAS in North Somerset Schools 2001 - 2006

	Total Schools	Secondary	Primary	Special	Pre School	Other	Total targeted pupils	New Pupils
2001-2	27	8	19	0	0	0	65	19
2002-3	56	9	39	1	4	3	113	47
2003-4	62	8	45	1	6	2	127	61
2004-5	63	9	39	2	9	4	156	84
2005-6	110	10	47	2	50	1	224	124

While there may be other factors affecting this substantial increase, it is an indication of response to need which again contributes to the picture of a greater and increasingly diverse minority ethnic population.

Travellers Education Service

Roma Gypsies and Irish Travellers are recognised in law as ethnic minorities. The Avon Consortium Traveller Education Service (TES) provides a specialist service to the children of Gypsies and Travellers in North Somerset. The numbers of Gypsy and Traveller children of school age between 2003/4 and 2006/7 are given in table 7 below, provided by the TES:

Table 7 Gypsy and Traveller Children in North Somerset 2003/4 - 2006/7

	2003/4	2004/5	2005/6	2006/7
Pre-school	13	14	14	11
On School Roll	48	55	57	56
Home Education	0	1	5	5
Total	61	70	76	72

Further Education

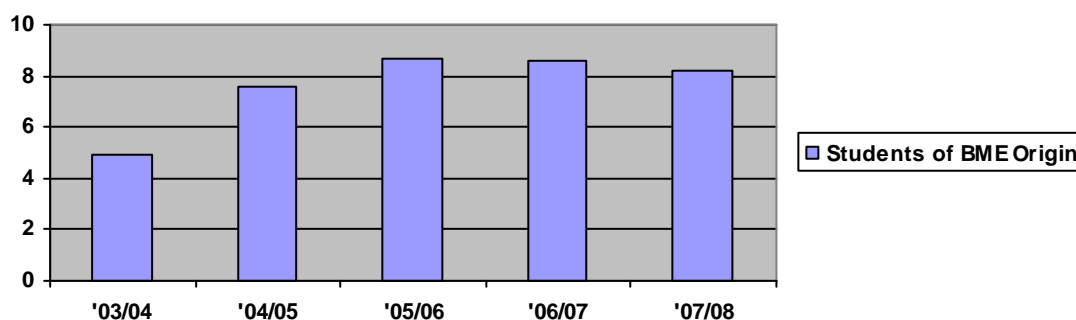
Weston College

Ethnicity figures from Weston College between 2003/4 and 2007/8 present a complex picture (see appendix 2). The total number of students reached a peak of over 20,000 in 04/05 but has since dropped for various reasons to just over 8500 in 07/08, largely as a result of government policy regarding funding of adult education.

The latest highly positive OFSTED report states that the College "is very good at engaging underachieving and hard to reach groups who are under represented in further education."¹⁰ The proportion of students of BME origin is given in the

chart below, showing an increase from 4.93% to a peak at 8.64% in '05/06 and staying at over 8% in the last two years. The chart shows the percentage of BME students discounting the figures for 'Not Known', though in the last two years these have been so low as to barely affect any percentages.

Chart 2 Percentage of students of BME origin 2003/4 - 2007/8



The ethnic categories are those used in the 2001 census and therefore allow for some comparisons, though there may be complex factors affecting the access of BME individuals to further education and no simple correlation can be applied.

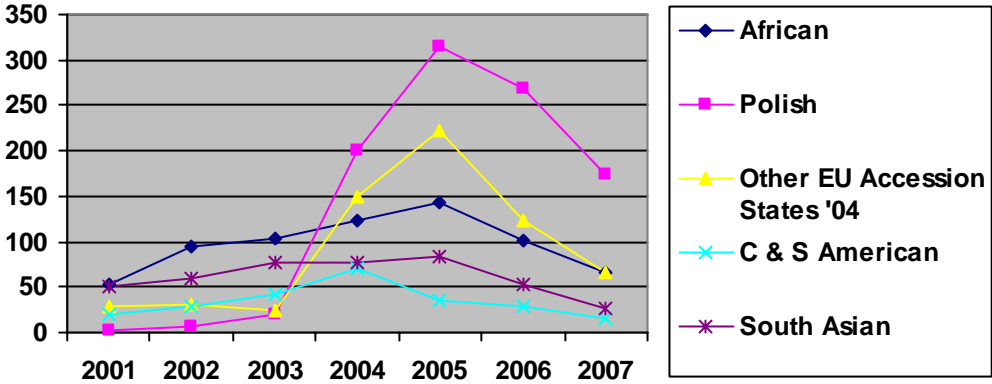
Effectively there has been an increase in students of BME origin of some 3½% since 2003 with the most significant rise being amongst 'White Other', which would include those of central and east European origin. Here we see an increase from 1.64% to 4.64% between 2003/4 and 2005/6 before falling slightly to 4% in the current year - a rise which by itself can account for much of the increased proportion of BME students. Figures of the student count by nationality for example show an increase in the number of Polish students from 3 in 2001, 6 in 2002, 19 in 2003 to 200 in 2004, a peak of 314 in 2005, before decreasing to 268 in 2006 and 173 in 2007. (See chart 2 below).

The only other category which has shown a consistent percentage rise relative to the student total is 'Black African' from 0.28% in 2003/4 to 0.72% in 2007/8. While the percentage increase here has been considerable (39%), we are dealing with relatively small numbers, and indeed the actual numbers have fallen (with the decrease in total number of students) so that we would need to be wary of drawing any direct conclusions. The trend does however reflect our own experience on the ground as discussed in more detail below.

Chart 3 is taken from figures of the student count by **nationality** rather than **ethnicity**. Other than the Polish figure I have added together a number of nationalities in order to give the broader picture (e.g. all from the other EU states which joined in 2004, all students from the continent of Africa). It should be borne in mind that the overall student numbers fell by more than 58% between 2004/5 and 2007/8. The reduction in total numbers of students is

relatively greater than the reduction in the numbers of students from the categories in the chart (other than for those from South Asia) and reflects the percentages in chart 2.

Chart 3 Numbers of Students Counted by Nationality 2001-2007



Source: Weston College. Student Count by Nationality. February 2008. This chart shows the dramatic rise in students from the EU accession states in 2004 and 2005.

During this time the College provided ESOL classes through funding via the Learning and Skills Council which became increasingly inundated so that there were considerable waiting lists and the College had to restrict publicity of the classes. More recently the Government controversially decided to reduce funding for ESOL. This has accordingly reduced the pressure on provision as many who were previously able to take advantage of free learning now struggle to find the money to finance courses themselves. There is currently a government consultation on the issue of ESOL provision nationally and how it can best be targeted.

Employment

There are employers in North Somerset with substantial numbers of BME workers, and various sectors that rely heavily on migrant labour with smaller scale employers. It is difficult to gather detailed and accurate figures, as indicated in the appended report "Migrant Workers: Initial Scoping Exercise, June 2006".³ Some employers are reluctant to respond to requests for information or simply do not see it as relevant.

We are aware, though, of a number of larger scale employers who take on BME workers on a substantial scale. These include Yeo Valley in Blagdon where there are many workers from Poland and Eastern Europe; Monaghan Mushrooms at Langford with over 400 employees from a similar background; Bristol Airport, where there are a range of nationalities employed across various tasks; First

Bus which has drivers from Eastern Europe; Lidl which employs numbers of workers from Eastern Europe in its warehouse; Portbury Docks.

There are numbers of BME people employed in various sectors such as Residential Care Homes, the Catering and Hotel industry, Cleaning, Health, the Building trade and as shop assistants. Combined with the existing and longer-established restaurant and catering trades provided by the Greek Cypriot, Bangladeshi and Chinese communities - and Italian, Thai, Japanese, Portuguese - this sector now makes up a significant number of people. There is a range of restaurants and takeaways throughout North Somerset including some of the more rural areas.

With the growth in BME numbers there has been a small but increasing number of self-employed people setting up shops to cater for the corresponding growth in demand for familiar food and other products. It is also noteworthy that the larger supermarkets are now retailing products to cater for this market, suggesting sufficient take-up to make this worthwhile.

In some areas attempts have been made to establish the number of BME workers in particular industries. For example all Care Homes have been written to, by ourselves and by North Somerset Council, to try to get accurate details about numbers and ethnicity as anecdotally we believe that they employ substantial numbers of BME staff. However the response has been extremely limited.

North Somerset Council Adult Social Services Contracts Section, which has the responsibility to monitor the care provided to any resident for whom they have a contract, asked the residential care homes where they were reviewing residents' care in the summer of 2007 for details of overseas staff employed. Of the 27 North Somerset homes visited, 16 reported that they employed no overseas workers, 5 had one worker, 2 had 2, 1 had 4, 1 had 6 and 1 had 10. There are some 75 residential care homes in North Somerset, and given the differences in these figures between homes it is difficult to draw any decisive conclusions from this.

However we do know, for example, that there are a significant number of Cameroonians employed in the care industry and they have their own Cameroonian Association with over 30 members. We are also in contact with a number of other care workers who are of Nigerian, Filipino and Zimbabwean origin for example as well as workers from eastern Europe.

Nationally, 16% of the care sector workforce is made up of workers from overseas.¹¹ The Council recognised the need to improve the language skills of

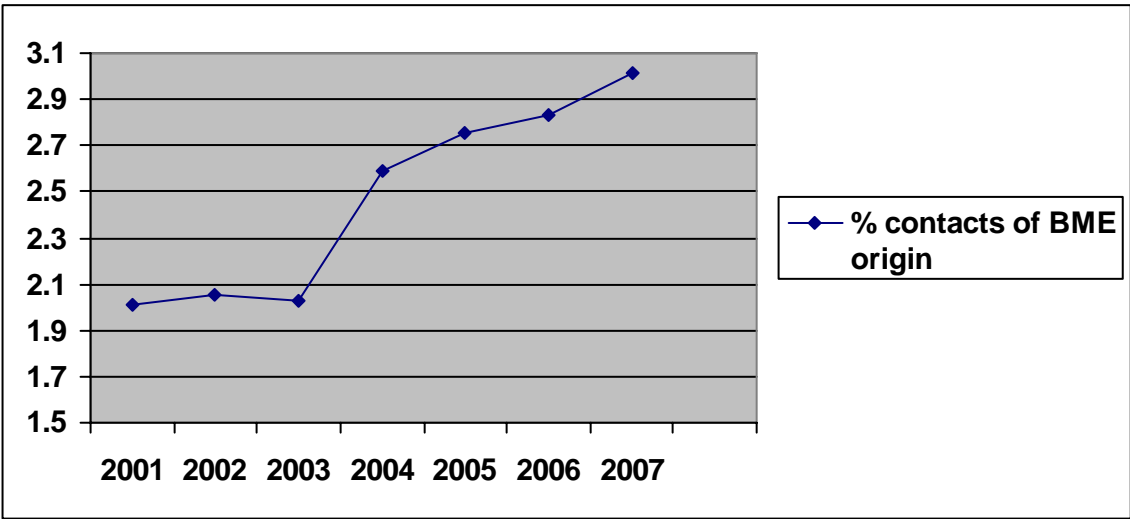
some of the care home workforce by setting up language and skills training which attracted 20 workers for the initial intake.

North Somerset Council

Adult Social Services

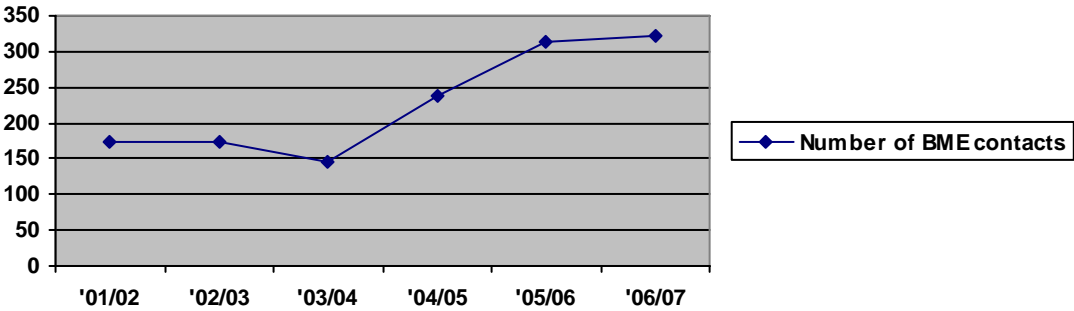
Statistics concerning the ethnicity of people contacting North Somerset Council Adult Social Services from 2001 to the present are shown in Appendix 3. This is useful because it covers the whole period since the last census and uses the categories from that census. As with all statistical information we have to be cautious over how we interpret it and over what can be inferred from it. There are considerable numbers each year where ethnicity is not recorded for various reasons ranging from over 19% in 2003/4 to a low of 7.35% in 2005/6. There can be many reasons for this, and while one can speculate as to which ethnic category they are more likely to belong, for the purposes of this analysis they have been simply set aside. We are left with figures for BME contacts which rise gradually over the period from 2.1% to 3.1%, as shown in the chart below.

Chart 4 Individual Contacts with Adult Social Services by Ethnicity 2001-07



Another measure is the actual number of contacts by the BME population with Adult Social Services over the period where ethnicity was stated. This shows a considerable overall rise (85%) particularly between '03/04 and '05/06 (114%). It should be noted that the drop in numbers in '03/04 to 146 is also the year with the largest percentage where the ethnic category is not known and where the figures are therefore least reliable.

Chart 5 Individual BME contacts with Adult Social Services 2001/2 - 2006/7



There is no dramatic increase in any particular ethnic category, though again a rise in the numbers of 'Other White' contacts from 100 in 2001/2 to 199 in 2006/7 would reflect what has already been noted regarding an increase in people of central and east European origin. There is also an increase in 'Black or Black British: African' (from a low of 1 in '01/02 to a high of 9 in '04/05) and 'Chinese or other ethnic group: Chinese' (1 in '01/02 to 14 in '06/07) over the period, but the total numbers are so small that it would be unwise to draw any major conclusions from this. It does, however, reinforce the impression of an increasing BME presence in North Somerset.

Overall the figures show a gradual and limited increase in the numbers of people from BME backgrounds making contact with Adult Social Services. In 2001 the proportion of 2.1% BME contacts is below the 3.26% of BME individuals in North Somerset as counted by the Census, and the most recent 3.1% figure for contacts would seem to be considerably below the numbers one would expect if they were to reflect the actual BME population. Possible reasons for this and ways of addressing the imbalance will be discussed later.

Community Learning Service

The Community Learning Service, which also falls within the Adult Social Services and Housing Directorate, has been seeking out and working with people from minority ethnic backgrounds as part of their commitment to improving access to education for adults across North Somerset. There have been a number of courses provided aimed at particular groups for specific purposes:

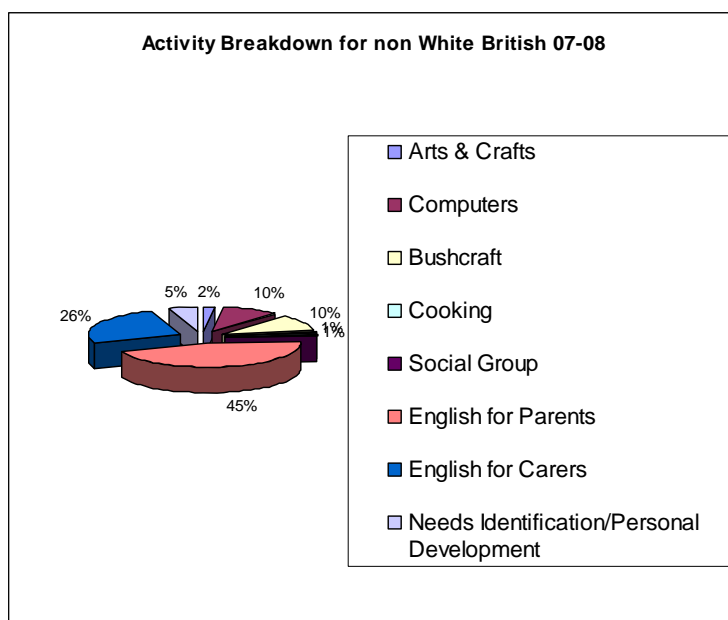
- Pre-ESOL classes for people with very limited English language skills between January and June 2007 for 125 people of Thai, Chinese, Polish, Lithuanian, Greek and Portuguese origin
- English for parents and carers of school-age children to improve their language skills and to enable them to have a better understanding of the British educational system and be able to support their children at school.

Provided for 57 people of 7 nationalities in Clevedon and Weston

- English for carers: a 10 week course to enable carers to improve their basic English language and progress to NVQ level 2 in health & care.
Provided for 18 people of 6 nationalities in Nailsea and Weston

Altogether in 2006/7 the Community Learning Service worked with 176 BME individuals (12 Asian, 17 Black, 18 Dual Heritage, 22 Chinese and 107 White Other). In 2007/8 this dropped to 94 (17 Asian, 12 Black, 4 Dual Heritage, 60 White Other and 1 Other).

The chart below gives a breakdown of the range of courses undertaken by people of BME origin in 2007/8:



Housing

In February 2007 the "North Somerset Black and Minority Ethnic Housing Needs Study" was published on behalf of the Council. The study's aim was "to develop both quantitative and qualitative understandings of the experiences and needs of North Somerset's minority ethnic communities in relation to housing and housing support services".¹²

The report refers to the 1991 and 2001 censuses, recognising that comparison "cannot be exact because the ethnic origin question did not remain the same. However, an approximate comparison can be made. In 1991, there were 1,387 people from the non-white minority ethnic communities in North Somerset. The 2001 Census found that there were 2,606 non-white minority ethnic people. The number of people from these minority ethnic communities has therefore

increased considerably over the decade - by nearly 90% or from 0.8% to 1.4% of the total population.

Because the available data is limited to only two censuses, with the result that longer-term trends cannot be determined, it is difficult to suggest to what extent these considerable increases will be continued into the future. However the non-white minority ethnic population is younger than the average. This suggests, other things being equal, that the number of 'visible' minority ethnic people and households will grow faster than the White British population as a higher proportion of the former will move into the age groups where, typically, households are formed and people start to have families".¹³

This is important to note, as generally the average age of those who migrate for work purposes will be younger than the average age of the host population, with consequent implications for the proportion of **all** BME households in the future.

Some of the conclusions of the report will be considered later.

There has also been a recent report commissioned by the authorities that formerly constituted Avon County Council on the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers. This report provided evidence demonstrating the need for extra accommodation within North Somerset. Currently there are 32 authorised pitches in North Somerset with a further 12 available shortly. The report recommended that 36 more permanent residential pitches be made available by 2011 with a further 13 by 2016. The report also recommended that 10 transit pitches be made available within the North Somerset boundary.¹⁴

Health

North Somerset Primary Care Trust

The Primary Care Trust (PCT) is responsible for commissioning health services for the residents of North Somerset. The Trust's Annual Report for 2006/7 notes that:

"There is a strong impression that the ethnic mix of North Somerset is changing. Hospital activity data suggest an increase in black population to around 2% with a further 1.8% being other white minorities. However, more detailed work is needed as hospital data inevitably gives a less than complete impression."¹⁵

We do not have any ethnic breakdown of users of community services. However, the Trust has provided statistics regarding the ethnicity of people admitted to hospital between January 2006 and September 2007 (see pie chart Appendix 4). Below the details are provided in tabular form:

Table 8 Ethnicity of NSPCT Registered Individuals Admitted to Hospital Jan '06 - Sept '07

Category	Number	Percentage	Percentage less 'not stated'
White British	74469	76.35%	95.27%
White Irish	620	0.64%	0.79%
Any other White background	1384	1.42%	1.77%
White and Black Caribbean	91	0.09%	0.12%
White and Black African	30	0.03%	0.04%
White and Asian	99	0.10%	0.13%
Any other mixed background	110	0.11%	0.14%
Indian	304	0.31%	0.39%
Pakistani	30	0.03%	0.04%
Bangladeshi	224	0.23%	0.29%
Any other Asian background	108	0.11%	0.14%
Caribbean	57	0.06%	0.07%
African	68	0.07%	0.09%
Any other Black background	23	0.02%	0.29%
Chinese	94	0.10%	0.12%
Any other ethnic group	455	0.47%	0.58%
Not stated	19373	19.86%	
Total BME		3.79%	4.73%
Total	97539		

In nearly 20% ethnicity is not stated, and one can only speculate as to whether the majority of these would be of BME origin or 'White British'. I have added another column which gives the percentage ignoring the 'Not Stated' figure. This clearly reflects more accurately the percentage that is likely to be 'White British', though it is not possible to say with absolute certainty how this might or might not distort the other percentages. With the 'Not Stated' figures included the percentage of BME origin would be 3.79 and without them it would be 4.73. There are no comparative figures over a period of time, so it is not possible to look at any trends using these statistics.

General Practitioners

GPs are expected to report on ethnicity of all **newly** registered patients by the Department of Health, though they do not have to do so for existing patients. These figures are reported through the PCT but have not been available for this report.

Weston General Hospital

The Hospital Trust both employs significant numbers of health staff from ethnic minorities and is responsible for maintaining statistical information on ethnicity of its patients. The statistics from the PCT above do not relate

exclusively to *Weston General* as they will include figures relating to other acute trusts.

Police

Avon and Somerset Police record all hate crimes within the area and have provided the following information:

Between 1st April 2007 and 29th February 2008, of 116 offences recorded as hate crimes, "the majority (86.2%) were perceived to be motivated by race due to comments made or the perception of the victim due to historical events. There were eight offences where homophobic comments were made, two religion-based offences, two offences record disability as the motivation and one offence where the victim's job is perceived to be the motivational factor."¹⁶

Ethnicity of victims was recorded in just over two thirds of the cases, and is reproduced in the table below:

Table 9 Victims of Hate Crime by Ethnicity April 1 2007 - Feb 29 2008

Ethnicity (Self-Classification)	No. of Victims
White - British	21
Asian	20
White - Other	13
Black	8
Mixed	7
Other Ethnic Group	5
Chinese	4
Total	78

These figures show that of the 78 hate crimes where ethnicity is recorded, 57 involve victims of BME origin and 21 where victims are White British. If these figures are an accurate overall reflection of hate crime they suggest that a person of BME origin is almost 3 times as likely as a White British person to be the victim of a hate crime.

In terms of the ethnicity of offenders, of the 24 records available 22 were classified as 'White British' and 2 as 'White Other'. Most offences involved 'violence against the person' (83.6%) while 12% involved criminal damage.

Citizens Advice Bureau

The Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) is a valuable source of advice and assistance to many, and can be particularly so for people who are new arrivals to the area and may be experiencing difficulties in employment, housing or other aspects of basic need. Our project has been working closely with the CAB and, as described later in the report, we have together provided a particular service for people of central and east European origin.

One might expect recent arrivals to the area to make use of these services. We only have statistics by ethnicity for 2006/7 and up to the end of January for 2007/8, and we cannot therefore draw any definitive conclusions from these. However, they do support the general trend indicated in this report. For example, leaving aside the numbers where ethnicity is not known, 7.36% of CAB clients were of BME origin in '06/'07 (1.25% were of EU nationality) and 8.05% in the current year to January (2.3% of EU nationality).¹⁷

BME Forum Project

The Project has been working since its inception on making contact with people from BME backgrounds in North Somerset with a view to ensuring people are aware of and receiving appropriate services, and to set up a Forum which could help both to **build** and **reflect** a dynamic and robust BME voluntary sector.

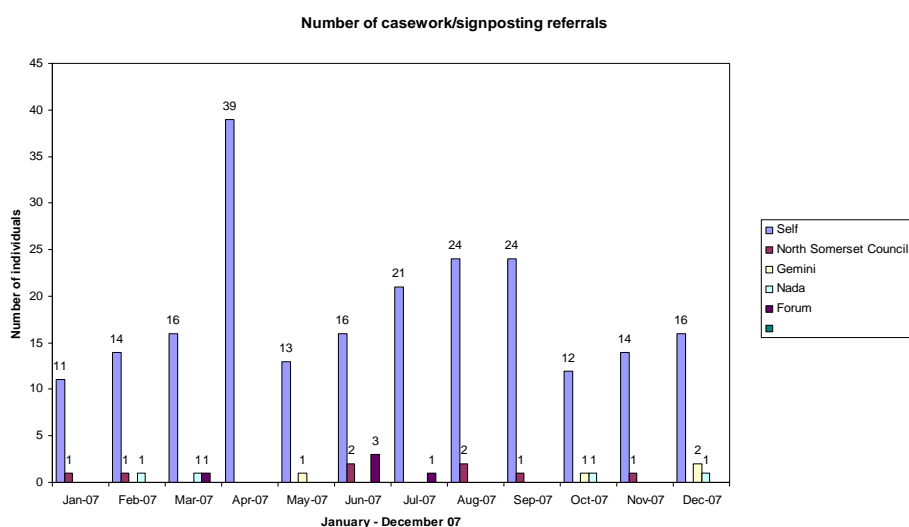
The primary need identified in the original application to the Big Lottery was for the development of a strong and vibrant BME voluntary sector, able to support and encourage groups and individuals. BME groups and individuals were seen as being isolated, largely unsupported and often not fully aware of nor accessing the statutory and voluntary services available.

The application summarised the situation for BME individuals as being "systematically disadvantaged and unable to participate fully in social and economic life within North Somerset."¹ Given these difficulties part of the work of the project has been to link people up to appropriate services and help deal with immediate problems so that they are able to participate more readily in the life and development of their community. The most effective way of bringing about longer-term and sustainable improvement was seen as the establishment of a Black and Minority Ethnic Forum.

Casework and Signposting Service

As the project has become more widely known, there has been an increasing number of referrals to the casework and signposting service, dealing with a range of problems. In the first year from January-December 2006 the project was involved with helping 159 people altogether with 21 individuals/families receiving a more detailed casework service. This involved negotiation with other agencies, calling case conferences to clarify and coordinate services, helping find additional finances, supporting housing applications etc.

Chart 6 Referrals to BME Project Jan-Dec 2007



As knowledge of the project's existence spread through publicity and word of mouth, the number of calls for advice and information both from individuals and agencies grew. Attendance at events and meetings also led to referrals or requests for help. In the year from January-December 2007, the project worked directly with 241 individuals/families as shown in Chart 6 above.

Polish and EU Migrant Workers

The project has worked to deal with the needs of the substantial numbers of people from Poland and other central and east European countries who are living and working in North Somerset. Initial contact with the Honorary Polish Consul in Bristol in 2006 suggested that there were considerable numbers of Poles and other recent EU nationals who were working in the North Somerset area. Bristol Airport now had direct flights to and from Poland suggesting both increased demand and also greater ease of migration and job-seeking.

People were experiencing a range of settling-in problems to do with housing, tax and similar issues as well as some more worrying concerns over exploitation (as outlined in the attached Migrant Worker Scoping report p9). The Polish Honorary Consul expressed concerns about people being exploited in some circumstances by unscrupulous employers who may also be their landlords, or employer and landlord working together to take financial advantage of

vulnerable workers. As a result a drop-in clinic was set up with the help of the North Somerset Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) and the Central and East European Society.

The clinic has relied on Polish-speaking volunteers who have recognised the difficulties experienced by their compatriots and have guided them towards appropriate sources of support and advice. It is now operating from the Badger Centre in Weston-super-Mare on a Monday morning, where CAB and SREC are based, and sees up to 15 people a week. Plans are in hand to obtain funding for an office which will create a more secure and permanent arrangement to support this community.

North Somerset BME Forum

The first meeting of the Forum was held in October 2006, and was attended by 34 individuals from 16 nationalities taking in Africa, Asia, South America and Europe. It agreed unanimously to set up a North Somerset BME Forum and elected a steering committee which met regularly throughout the following year. Forum meetings were held quarterly with the aim of bringing people together, having speakers who could be informative about relevant issues, and discussing matters which were of mutual interest and concern.

A bi-monthly newsletter has reported on the issues discussed at Forum meetings, and also contained information on a range of topics with articles from local organisations and agencies. These included

- A Community Theatre project
- Housing Department information for Gypsies and Travellers
- Citizens Advice Bureau
- Community Learning Service
- Victim Support
- Employment Agency
- Supportive Parents
- AIDS and HIV services
- Libraries
- VANS on training opportunities for officers of voluntary groups
- The Play Forum
- Domestic Abuse
- Supported Housing
- The Fire Service

Newsletters have been distributed via libraries and various community and other outlets, and sent to the 150 Forum members.

In November 2007 the Forum held its AGM event which was attended by over 130 people from 26 different nationalities. It elected a Management

Committee reflecting ethnic backgrounds from Cameroon, Botswana, India, Bangladesh, Philippines, Jamaica, Brazil, Poland, Japan, Sri Lanka and Britain. It also adopted a constitution with the aim of developing the Forum "so that it can represent the views and wishes of the minority ethnic communities in North Somerset, be a focal point for the BME voluntary sector, provide mutual support in the face of difficulties and prejudice, contribute to the planning and development of local services and enable BME groups and individuals to fully participate in the economic and social life of the area".¹⁸

IDENTIFIED NEED

A key issue for many in the BME population, identified at an early stage as a major concern by the Forum, is isolation. A questionnaire was sent to Forum members in April 2007 which confirmed that the social aspect of the Forum was hugely significant.

The questionnaire also identified the following issues as being of importance to Forum members: immigration, local and national; naturalisation; ESOL; housing; transport; drop-in places; minority language material in libraries; education; employment; Council services; community safety; extracurricular activities for BME children; social integration; medical/dental services; disability rights; police training; pre-school education regarding diversity and culture.

The project has received requests for advice and assistance varying from straightforward help with completing forms to more complex housing, employment, discrimination or harassment situations. Some may require joint working with other agencies such as the Council or SARI, which has concentrated on supporting victims of racial harassment and abuse, and can involve many hours' work. Providing reassurance and building confidence can be crucial in helping individuals to resolve problems.

Recent contacts have included requests for advice on where to get help in becoming self-employed, problems of bullying for BME children in school and initial dissatisfaction with the school's response, racial harassment at work, housing problems for an older disabled woman and racial abuse and persecution of an Asian landlady in a rural public house. People are mostly self-referred as the existence of the project is becoming more widely known, but referrals also come from a range of sources including the Council, local domestic abuse organisations and through the Forum. (See chart 6)

Racial harassment and attacks are a concern for many from minority ethnic groups. They can range from verbal abuse to the most horrendous assaults such

as that recently perpetrated on a man at an Indian Takeaway in Winscombe who was thrown through the window of his shop.

The BME Housing Needs Study quoted above noted that of the 117 households involved in the survey "27 interviewees (23.1%) said that, in the last three years, they or a member of their household had suffered harassment or attacks that they thought were due to their race."¹⁹ Of these 17 had reported the event, and half of those were satisfied with the response. Reasons for not reporting were that it 'wasn't worth it or nothing would be done'.

Other conclusions of the housing survey relevant to this report were that "knowledge amongst those outside the sector of housing association accommodation options is lower than may have been expected" and that "there appears to be some unmet need for housing-related support for people with long-term illnesses or disabilities. Many of those with a household member with a long term illness or disability have not heard of basic care and support services provided by the Council or housing associations".²⁰ Such findings support the argument that the BME population in general is less likely than the 'host' population to be aware of, or to make use of, services.

DISCUSSION

Evidence

Indications from Education, EMAS and the National Insurance registrations as evidenced above suggest a considerable increase in the number of people of BME origin living and working in North Somerset. The Office of National Statistics experimental figures also suggest increases. This supports the anecdotal evidence and everyday experience of an increasingly diverse population both ethnically and culturally. Evidence from neighbouring authorities, notably Sedgemoor and Mendip District Councils, further supports this.

As stated at the beginning of the report, this is not a census and it cannot provide accurate numbers of BME individuals living and working in North Somerset. What it can do is to suggest trends and present a picture based on the evidence from the range of sources quoted and from SREC's own experience.

As indicated in the Housing report referred to above, the non-white minority ethnic population, as recorded between the 1991 and 2001 censuses, rose from 1,387 to 2606 - by nearly 90%. The Census itself, as suggested above, may well undercount the BME population.

The experimental figures from the Office of National Statistics suggest a further 46% increase in the BME population as a whole between 2001 and 2004. The non-white figure rises from 1.38% to 2.54% of the total population (an increase of 84%) and the whole BME figure from 3.26 to 4.76% (46%). This is before the EU enlargement when we know that a substantial number of central and east Europeans ('White Other') came to work in North Somerset.

Other indicators of growth come from the figures regarding National Insurance number registrations to overseas nationals which are thought to have tripled between 2003 and 2006, and from schools where the estimated number of pupils who speak English as an additional language rose by 86.5% between 2004 and 2006. Add to this the evidence from EMAS and a picture begins to develop of a North Somerset community which is becoming increasingly diverse in terms of ethnic origin and culture.

This trend is also likely to be maintained as noted above in the Housing report. We know that migrant workers in general are younger than the host population and therefore, if people remain and settle, households will "grow faster than the White British population as a higher proportion of the former will move into the age groups where, typically, households are formed and people start to have families".¹²

Having said that, at this stage evidence suggests that the majority of arrivals from the EU accession countries are single. The South West TUC, writing in 2006, notes that in the South West as a whole "nearly all (94%) of those who have registered so far have no dependents.....This is also a very young group of people. The age range 18-34 makes up 88% of the total incoming workforce."²¹

Much of this report has focused on the increase in the numbers of recent migrant workers, which has perhaps been most notable. There are, though, established communities as noted above who have been in North Somerset for many years and are now in their second and third generation. There is also a growing number of professional people from BME backgrounds moving from urban to more rural areas and these are beginning to be reflected in the figures for school students.

Statutory Services

The overall increase in the BME population as outlined above is not fully reflected in the figures of contacts made with Adult Social Services nor the Primary Care Trust. The reasons for this are recognised nationally by the Department of Health: that people of BME origin are less likely than the 'host' population to approach 'the authorities' for help or to take up services that are available for a variety of reasons. This discrepancy between estimated BME

numbers in the population and take-up of services has already been recognised and acted on in North Somerset.

The Partnership of North Somerset Council, the Primary Care Trust and the Police brought SREC to North Somerset and as a result of SREC's work the BME Forum Project was able to begin making contact with the BME communities. An important part of this work has been ensuring people are aware of and have access to appropriate services.

Recognition of the under-use of services by BME older people led to the Council, PCT and Avon and Wiltshire Partnership Health Trust including in their Partnerships for Older Peoples Project bid the need for a Community Development Worker specifically for the BME community. More recently the PCT, for the same reasons, has appointed a Community Development Worker for BME mental health.

Demographics

North Somerset has a population whose average age is higher than that of Britain as a whole. In its consultation over its Elder Persons' Strategy, the Council gave the following details on its website which clearly illustrate the point:

"According to the 2001 Census the breakdown of people over 50 and above in the UK and North Somerset was as follows:

	Over 50	Over 60	Over 70	Over80
United Kingdom	33.3%	20.8%	11.5%	4.2%
North Somerset	39.5%	24.8%	14.4%	5.6%

(Figures are a percentage of the total population)

According to the Office for National Statistics 2004 sub national population projections the numbers of older people will increase by 2029 to:

	Over 50	Over 60	Over 70	Over80
United Kingdom	40%	28.2%,	16.0%	7.1%
North Somerset	47%	34.8%,	20.9%	9.9%

The impact of this on council services will be to increase pressure on adult social care services since frailty and dependency increase with age."²²

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

Noting the figures and trends described above, we can say with certainty that the BME population in North Somerset has increased considerably since the last census, and that this increase is likely to be maintained. There was a near 90% increase between 1991 and 2001 of the non-white population, and a further suggested 84% increase between 2001 and 2004 (1.38% to 2.54%, Tables 1 and 2). There is every reason to think this will have been maintained in the period since then, so that the non-white population will have at least doubled since 2001.

The increase since 2001 of the BME population in total - taking into account the effects of EU migration since the accession of new states in 2004 and 2007 - is likely to be substantial since 2001. A conservative estimate would be that the BME population as a whole is likely to have already doubled since the last census.

The gains from having a migrant workforce are clear. Already North Somerset is benefiting from the arrival of younger migrants who are supporting the growth of a flourishing tourist industry and enable the care and health services to meet the needs of the overall population. As the 'host' population becomes relatively older, the benefits from this workforce will continue to increase. The South West TUC booklet debunks many of the myths about immigration, and points out that "the South West is getting older: we are living longer, the birth rate is low and the region a popular place for retired people. Between 1992 and 2002, deaths exceeded births by more than 24,000." 23

The Audit Commission in its report "Crossing Borders: Responding to the local challenges of migrant workers" sums up the current situation by stating that "Migration for work is increasing rapidly, bringing economic benefits.....Most migrant workers are young and few bring dependants, so their need for public services is low."²⁴

The combination of newer arrivals and those of BME origin who have been in North Somerset longer-term adds to the overall richness and diversity of the area. Both make a substantial contribution to the social, cultural and financial wealth of North Somerset.

The North Somerset Partnership, which brings together a range of partners including key public organisations, private businesses and voluntary and community groups, has produced a "Sustainable Community Strategy" with a vision for the future and a plan of how to get there. The strategy suggests that "the area has a relatively small black and minority ethnic population

compared to the national average (figures from 2001 census) but our cultural diversity is growing with an estimated 58 first languages spoken in our schools." One of the aims from the strategy is to "ensure all people are able to make a positive contribution to their communities" by "encouraging black and minority ethnic and under represented groups to have a say in key services and facilities through appropriate accessible information and support." 25

Discussion of immigration is beset with pitfalls and potential disagreements over a wide range of issues: from terminology/classification used, to statistics and their interpretation, to the question of the benefits gained versus the possible costs involved. It would be unfortunate if this report led to negative responses. Our purpose in highlighting the increasing number of people from ethnic minority backgrounds in North Somerset is to raise the issue of how the needs of all can be properly met, how people can be enabled to play a full part in the social, economic and increasingly diverse cultural life of the area and how communities can be assisted to understand and appreciate each other.

In his book 'Bloody Foreigners', Robert Winder makes the point that "Britain has absorbed foreign genes since it was first discovered by continental wanderers"²⁶ and that there have been waves of immigration over millennia. Yet while extolling the virtues of the emigrant - intrepid adventurers overcoming dangers and conquering hostile environments - somehow these positive images are not transferred to the immigrant who is often, of course, facing just those perils and using their knowledge and skills to overcome them.

He quotes John Maynard Keynes who wrote that "migration is the oldest action against poverty. It selects those who most want help. It is good for the country to which they go; it helps break the equilibrium of poverty in the country from which they come. What is the perversity in the human soul that causes people to resist so obvious a good?"²⁷

Robert Winder says that in writing the book he comes to the conclusion that "it is pointless even to brood on whether it can be described as a 'good' or a 'bad' thing. It is like wondering whether it is good or bad to grow old".²⁸ He does however suggest that, ultimately, it is beneficial:

"The metaphors for immigration are usually aquatic: we talk of floods and tides, of being swamped or drowned. We might do better to think of Britain as a lake refreshed by one stream that bubbles in and another that trickles out. The fish might squabble and at times attack one another; conditions sometimes favour the pike, sometimes the minnow. Every so often the incoming stream stirs the still pond, but over time the lake adapts and develops a new,

unexpected ecology. Without the oxygen generated by fresh water, it would stagnate".²⁹

Recommendations

Unfortunately a bid to the Big Lottery for 5 year funding to take forward the work of the BME Forum Project was not successful. While SREC is committed to continuing and developing this work, funding is clearly problematic. The Forum is in its infancy and while it is beginning to have effect and make itself felt it requires support and nurturing. The support of the Partners in seeking further funding for the Forum and its work would be rewarding in developing community cohesion.

The recommendations from the BME Housing Needs Study should be fully implemented, notably recommendation 3 regarding publicising housing and care support services among the BME population and recommendation 4 regarding improving communication with people from ethnic minority backgrounds.

The development of a suitable drop-in facility for the BME community would encourage social opportunities and reduce isolation. It would provide a 'first stop shop' for new arrivals with opportunities for signposting and socialising. It would also give more established BME residents volunteering options and give a focal point for the BME communities. The costs of renting suitable premises would be relatively low, with possibilities of developing an income and becoming at least partly self-financing. Initial funding would be required.

This report has begun the process of looking in more detail at the makeup of the BME communities in North Somerset, how needs can be met and how community cohesion can be nurtured. There should be an annual update of this work to keep it current and enable the development of appropriate services.

While it is essential that services should be culturally sensitive and able to meet the needs of minorities, we need to be alert to anxieties felt by the host population often caused by raising fears through emotive language and myth-making. It is important that these issues are positively addressed through community cohesion programmes and other initiatives.

To achieve community cohesion the Partners of the North Somerset Partnership in particular should agree a joint Action Plan to monitor and manage effectively the changes in demographics.

Appendix 1

- ¹ Sharon Roberts. Application to Big Lottery. 2004. SREC
- ² Evans, Pye and Smith. Migrant Workers: The Challenge for the South West (Skills and Learning Intelligence Module, University of Exeter - May 2006)
- ³ Sharon Roberts. Migrant Workers: Initial Scoping Exercise. June 2006. SREC
- ⁴ Office of National Statistics.
www.statistics.gov.uk/about/data/methodology/specific/population/future/imps/updates/default.asp
- ⁵ Charles Dorr. SW Multi-Agency Migrant Worker Group. SWLGA. 2007
- ⁶ Carrie-Anne Hiscock. Migrant Workers in Somerset. September 2006
Somerset County Council
- ⁷ Carrie Williams. Ethnicity in Somerset - Key Figures and Analysis from the 2001 Census. June 2004. Somerset County Council
Carrie-Anne Hiscock. Ethnicity in Somerset - Update (August 2006) Somerset County Council
- ⁸ Africaans, Albanian, Bangla, Belarussian, Bulgarian, Cantonese, Chichewa, Creole (English), Farsi, Georgian, German, Greek, Hindi, Hungarian, Ibibio, Ilingl, Ilocano, Italian, Japanese, Latvian, Lithuanian, Kerala, Konkanni, Malayalam, Mandarin, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Serbian, Shona, Slovak, Soto, Spanish, Sylheti, Tagalog, Tamil, Thai, Turkish, Ukranian, Urdu, Vietnamese, Visaya, Whenzou, Xhosa, Zulu.
- ⁹ Judith Longstreth. Bristol Ethnic Minority Achievement Service: Work with North Somerset LA Sept 2005-July 2006
- ¹⁰ OFSTED. Weston College Inspection Report March 2008
- ¹¹ Office of National Statistics Annual Population Survey 2006
- ¹² Bob Blackaby. North Somerset Black and Minority Ethnic Housing Needs Survey Final Report February 2007. p8
- ¹³ As above pp13-14
- ¹⁴ Buckinghamshire Chilterns University College. West of England Gypsy Traveller Accomodation (and Other Needs) Assessment 2006-16 October 2007
- ¹⁵ Health in North Somerset. The Annual Report of the Director of Public Health 2006-7. North Somerset NHS Primary Care Trust
- ¹⁶ Source: Information on Hate Crimes in North Somerset April 2007-February 2008 supplied by Avon and Somerset Police
- ¹⁷ Source: Client Profile Analysis provided by CAB February 2008
- ¹⁸ North Somerset Black and Minority Ethnic Forum Constitution 2007
- ¹⁹ Bob Blackaby as above p5
- ²⁰ As above p58
- ²¹ South West TUC. Who makes up the South West? See www.tuc.org.uk/extras/myths06.pdf
- ²² North Somerset Council. Developing a Strategy for Older People for North Somerset Council - Consultation Paper. 2007
- ²³ South West TUC. Who makes up the South West?

²⁴Crossing borders: Responding to the local challenges of migrant workers.
Audit Commission 2007

²⁵North Somerset Sustainable Community Strategy 2008 - 2026. North
Somerset Partnership

²⁶Robert Winder. Bloody Foreigners *The Story of Immigration to Britain*
Abacus

²⁷As above pxiii

²⁸As Above

²⁹As Above p7

Appendix 2 Ethnic origin of North Somerset School Students 2005-2008

Category	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
White: British	21826	23418	24612	25925	26238	26304
White: Irish	31	35	42	44	43	44
White: Other White	346	313	315	353	309	452
TOTAL WHITE	22203	23766	24,969	26,322	26,590	26,800
Mixed: White and Black Caribbean	69	79	83	106	128	144
Mixed: White and Black African	31	41	43	44	40	46
Mixed: White and Asian	77	93	109	118	126	142
Mixed: Other Mixed	132	147	162	174	195	212
TOTAL MIXED	309	359	397	442	489	544
Asian or Asian British: Indian	30	36	51	51	74	79
Asian or Asian British: Pakistani	10	13	13	21	20	24
Asian or Asian British: Bangladeshi	36	41	43	56	63	75
Asian or Asian British: Other Asian	20	22	43	46	44	53
TOTAL ASIAN OR ASIAN BRITISH	96	112	150	174	201	231
Black or Black British: Caribbean	7	16	14	11	12	10
Black or Black British: African	10	17	26	27	45	51
Black or Black British: Other Black	6	10	15	20	24	23
TOTAL BLACK OR BLACK BRITISH	23	43	55	58	81	84
Chinese or other ethnic group: Chinese	47	49	62	68	70	74
Chinese or other ethnic group: Other ethnic group	31	37	45	48	56	49
TOTAL CHINESE OR OTHER	78	86	107	116	126	123
Information refused	307	306	293	234	461	288
Not obtained	4937	3457	2181	801	205	66
TOTAL BME	883	948	1066	1187	1249	1478
TOTAL	27,953	28,129	28,152	28,147	28,153	28,136

Appendix 3

Students Attending Weston College by Ethnic Origin 2003-2008

Ethnic Origin	2003/4	2004/5	2005/6	2006/7	2007/8	%03/4*	%04/5*	%05/6*	%06/7*	%07/8*
White British	17572	18491	16702	10580	7772	95.07	92.42	91.36	91.37	91.78
White Irish	76	97	101	48	27	0.41	0.48	0.55	0.41	0.32
White Other	304	740	848	516	339	1.64	3.7	4.64	4.46	4.0
White/Black Caribbean	18	42	27	17	18	0.1	0.21	0.15	0.15	0.21
White/Black African	15	30	19	12	17	0.08	0.15	0.1	0.1	0.2
White/Asian	17	28	24	23	18	0.09	0.14	0.13	0.2	0.21
Mixed Other	27	39	45	29	24	0.15	0.19	0.25	0.25	0.28
Indian	57	64	74	33	22	0.31	0.32	0.4	0.28	0.26
Pakistani	10	13	7	7	7	0.05	0.06	0.04	0.06	0.08
Bangladeshi	35	36	39	27	18	0.19	0.18	0.21	0.23	0.21
Asian Other	71	65	74	54	30	0.39	0.32	0.4	0.47	0.35
Black Caribbean	58	82	58	33	28	0.31	0.41	0.32	0.28	0.33
Black African	51	83	101	71	61	0.28	0.41	0.55	0.61	0.72
Black Other	23	30	24	16	10	0.12	0.15	0.13	0.14	0.12
Chinese	57	68	50	46	36	0.31	0.34	0.27	0.4	0.43
Other	93	100	88	67	41	0.5	0.5	0.48	0.58	0.48
Not Known	516	510	275	86	54					
TOTALS	19000	20518	18556	11665	8522					

* Figures rounded to 2 decimal points. Percentage is of total discounting the figures for 'Not Known'

Source: Weston College, February 2008

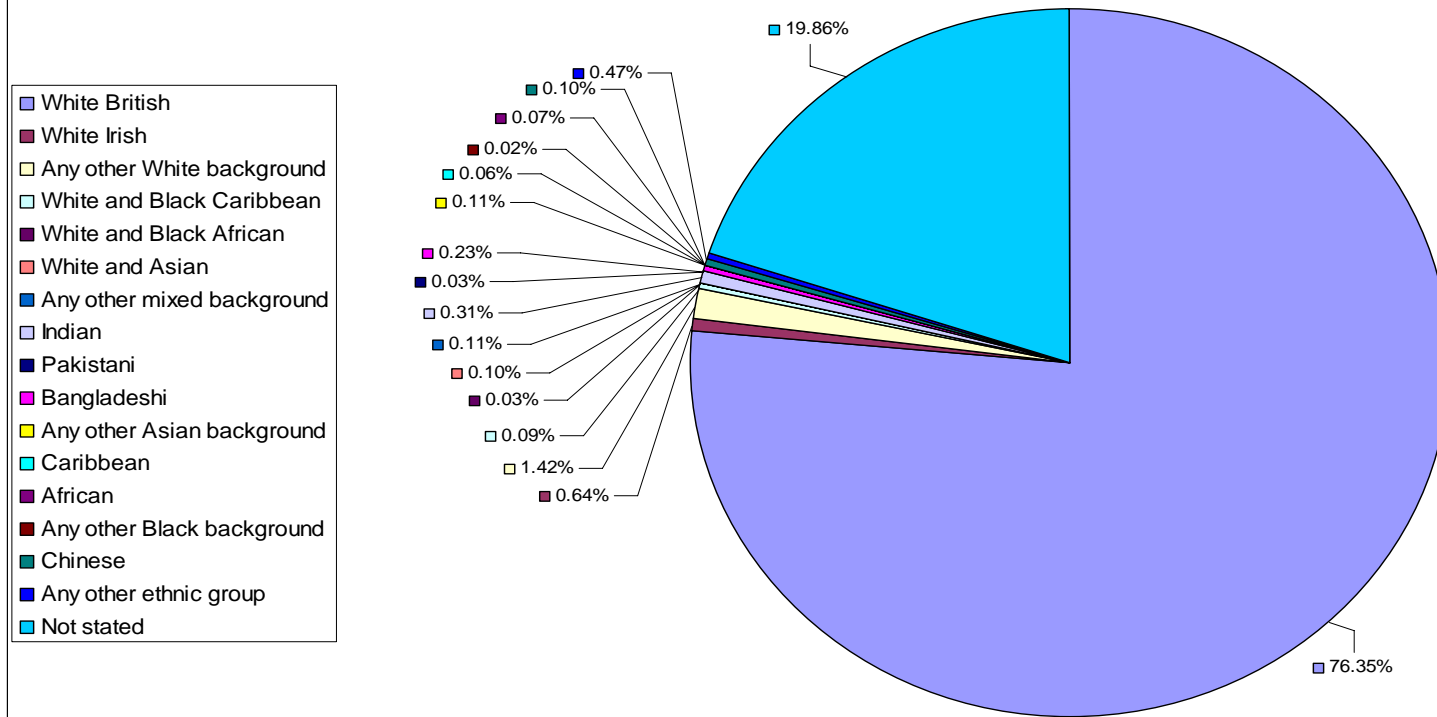
Appendix 4 North Somerset Council Adult Social Services: Contacts by Ethnicity 2001-2007

Category	'01-'02	'02-'03	'03-'04	'04-'05	'05-'06	'06-'07	Apr-Dec 07
White: British	8472	8342	7198	8943	11053	11063	7562
White: Irish	32	51	32	67	73	64	41
White: Other White	100	85	89	127	180	199	151
TOTAL WHITE	8604	8478	7319	9137	11306	11326	7754
Mixed: White and Black Caribbean	2	1	1		6	1	
Mixed: White and Black African	2	1		1		2	2
Mixed: White and Asian	2		1		1	1	
Mixed: Other Mixed	6	2	5	1			4
TOTAL MIXED	12	4	7	2	7	4	6
Asian or Asian British: Indian	1	6	2	2	3	5	2
Asian or Asian British: Pakistani		1		4	1		
Asian or Asian British: Bangladeshi						2	
Asian or Asian British: Other Asian	1	2	2	5	2	5	1
TOTAL ASIAN OR ASIAN BRITISH	2	9	4	11	6	12	3
Black or Black British: Caribbean	2	4	1	6	8	6	3
Black or Black British: African	1	1	4	9	7	7	6
Black or Black British: Other Black	3	7	3	3	4	1	1
TOTAL BLACK OR BLACK BRITISH	6	12	8	18	19	14	10
Chinese or other ethnic group: Chinese	1	1	4	5	12	14	
Chinese or other ethnic group: Other ethnic group	21	13	5	8	16	15	24
TOTAL CHINESE OR OTHER	22	14	9	13	28	29	24
TOTAL BME	174	175	146	238	313	322	235
%age BME *	2.01	2.05	2.03	2.59	2.75	2.83	3.01
TOTAL where ethnic category known	8646	8509	7347	9181	11366	11385	7797
Ethnic Category Not Known	1120	1496	1736	1826	902	1164	1200
TOTAL	9766	10013	9083	11007	12268	12549	8997

*BME percentage of total where ethnic category known Source: North Somerset Council February 2008

Appendix 5 NSPCT Ethnicity Details January 2006 to September 2007

Breakdown of Ethnicity of NSPCT Registered Individuals Who Were Admitted To Hospital from January 2006 to September 2007.



Appendix 6

Migrant Workers: Initial Scoping Exercise June 2006

Report Prepared by Sharon Roberts Somerset Racial Equality Council

MIGRANT WORKERS: INITIAL SCOPING EXERCISE

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report outlines an initial scoping exercise to identify some of the key issues for North Somerset in relation to its migrant worker population, that warrant further investigation and work. This project was initiated by the Responding to Hate Incidents in North Somerset partnership, which was keen to develop a better understanding of their migrant worker population.

PROJECT PARTICIPANTS

Avon and Somerset Police

Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Care Trust

North Somerset Council

Somerset Racial Equality Council

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Further work to develop a deeper understanding of European migrant groups

Ascertaining the numbers of migrant workers employed through agencies in North Somerset by sector

Investigating the numbers of Migrant workers within the manufacturing, sex trade and uptake of skilled migrant workers in both the public and private sectors

Hosting a workshop or sequence of multidisciplinary meetings where discussions are focussed around the following local issues

- Finding employment
- Improving conditions of employment
- Housing
- Access to services
- Flexible opportunities to learn English
- Opportunities to improve quality of leisure time

AIM OF THE STUDY

This study came out of the 'Responding to Hate Incidents in North Somerset' Partnership, who agreed to undertake a scoping exercise to determine the extent of the migrant worker population in North Somerset and identify issues that might give rise to community tension in the longer term.

REASON FOR THE STUDY

In January 2006 a multi-agency meeting was held under the auspices of the Local Strategic Partnership in an attempt to substantiate rumours that there were a lot of asylum seekers in North Somerset and that they were having difficulty accessing the basic services to which they are entitled while their claim is being processed¹.

This meeting established that the Government has a policy of sending destitute asylum seekers around the UK to designated 'dispersal centres' while their claims are being processed. These dispersal centres are areas that have an adequate infrastructure to cope with new arrivals, and in the South West region these are Bristol, Gloucester, Plymouth, Swindon. North Somerset is not a dispersal centre, which is significant because it means that there are very few asylum seekers being supported in the area – less than 10 at that time.

¹ Health and Well-being Partnership Conference (October 2005) hosted by North Somerset Council, Winter Gardens, Weston –super-Mare

Despite the low incidents of asylum seekers, numerous anecdotal reports suggested that there are large numbers of asylum seekers in North Somerset. Two possible explanations were offered: media attention being interpreted as suggesting the population was bigger than it is, or people are confusing asylum seekers with migrant workers. There were suggestions that migrant workers were wrongly being denied access to services because of assumptions being made about their immigration status and some practitioners being uncertain as to their entitlements.

More troubling was that the partnership became aware of an allegation of serious crime being made by a migrant worker, who was reluctant to come forward because she had been warned off from making contact with any of the public authorities.

Another incident revealed that parts of the migrant population were hidden and potentially vulnerable. In this incident a person was arrested for a crime and several migrant workers were found living on the premises. With the employer in custody these people lost their jobs and homes and did not have enough money to return to their country of origin. This was resolved through their Embassy².

Members of the 'Responding to Hate Incidents in North Somerset' partnership agreed to explore the possible confusion between asylum seekers and migrant workers as part of their task of identifying trends and policy issues in relation to hate incidents in this unitary authority area. Being aware of the above-mentioned incidents, as well as the national trends and issues in relation to migrant workers, it also agreed to attempt to determine the size of the migrant worker population in North Somerset as well as identify some of the key issues that might hamper community relations and precipitate community tension in the longer term.

² Discussion with an interpreter (November 2004) who recounted aspects of experiences of providing language assistance to Avon and Somerset Police

METHODOLOGY

The methodology for this study was less formal than usual models of research because of the hidden nature of the migrant worker population and lack of formal information about them. This study collected, where possible verified, and evaluated largely anecdotal evidence. As such it is merely a scoping exercise that can provide a starting point for further research and work with the migrant worker population.

This North Somerset – based study contacted a number of organisations (listed in Appendix 1) to determine the numbers, nationalities and employment sector of migrant workers who were in contact with. This contact also gave a flavour of some of the issues for migrant workers in North Somerset, which have been evaluated in the light of the national picture to identify possible areas of local concern.

The study was primarily conducted through employers and public authorities, and where possible used the information about employment sector to reduce the incidence of double counting. This approach means that people living in North Somerset but working outside the local authority boundary area are unlikely to have been included. It also means that information was reliant upon employers' cooperation.

Participants were not asked to make reference to whether or not they thought that workers had migrated legally or were here illegally because of the widespread confusion as to what these terms mean³.

'MIGRANT WORKER' DEFINED

³ TUC (2003) Overworked, Underpaid and Over Here: Migrant Workers in Britain

For the purposes of this study, no restriction was attached to the term 'migrant worker'. As such information was gathered in respect of EU and non-EU workers, and there was no discrimination between people who had lived in the UK for less than five years and those who had resided here for longer periods. This being said the information provided predominantly concerned people who had lived here for less than five years.

THE NATIONAL PICTURE – AN OUTLINE

Nationally, the media has been reporting that the enlargement of the EU has signalled a new wave of immigration into the UK. The government has stressed the economic benefits that these legal migrants bring⁴, and this benefit has been particularly significant in the rural East of England⁵ – an area that has had an estimated 50-80,000 migrant workers enter the workforce during the course of the last 5 years⁶.

The welcome boost to the public purse through their tax contributions has been noted by the Institute of Policy and Research⁷, though the methodology for the fiscal contributions are controversial⁸ – not least because so far they have not been able to factor in the costs of providing education for dependant children with any accuracy⁹.

In 2004 a national Worker Registration Scheme was launched, under which workers from the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia must register with the Home Office within the first month of starting work in the UK to take advantage of their right to

⁴ Tony Blair speech to CBI (27th April 2004) cited in Panorama: Britain's New Migrants, broadcast Sunday, (24 April 2005), on BBC One, 22:20 BST.

⁵ DEFRA Press Release (9th May 2006) www.defra.gov.uk

⁶ McKay and Winkelmann (2005) Migrant Workers on the East of England, East of England Development Agency

⁷ Sriskandarajah et al (2005) Paying Their Way: The Fiscal Contribution of Immigrants in the UK, Institute for Policy and Research

⁸ Migration Watch (19 April 2006)

http://www.migrationwatchuk.org/briefingpapers/economic/fiscal_contribution_of_migrants.asp?search=education

⁹ Sriskandarajah et al (2005) Paying Their Way: The Fiscal Contribution of Immigrants in the UK, Institute for Policy and Research

work in the UK. This registration system has helped to fill the gap that had existed in relation to the numbers of EU migrants and sectors in which they predominately work. The data suggests that although larger numbers of people from these countries have registered under the scheme than was originally expected, nationally they make up only 0.4% of the workforce¹⁰.

Research in the East of England¹¹ and statistics from the Worker Registration Scheme¹² both suggest that generally EU migrant workers tend to be clustered in the following sectors:

- Agriculture
- Cleaning
- Construction
- Health
- Hotels and catering
- Manufacturing
- Transport

It has been suggested that employers are becoming increasingly reliant on migrant labour to overcome recruitment problems¹³, and find that the workers tend to be 'highly flexible and dynamic'¹⁴.

However, many of the workers are not using their full level of skills or qualifications – even though their skills and qualifications are needed in the labour market. The medical profession is one example where the retraining and an expensive registration system constitute significant obstacles for qualified professionals such as Pharmacists and Nurses¹⁵.

¹⁰ Drew and Sriskandarajah (2006) Enlargement: Bulgaria and Romania – Migration Implications for the UK, Institute for Policy and Research

¹¹ McKay and Winkelmann (2005) Migrant Workers on the East of England, East of England Development Agency

¹² Drew and Sriskandarajah (2006) Enlargement: Bulgaria and Romania – Migration Implications for the UK, Institute for Policy and Research

¹³ McKay and Winkelmann (2005) Migrant Workers on the East of England, East of England Development Agency

¹⁴ Drew and Sriskandarajah (2006) Enlargement: Bulgaria and Romania – Migration Implications for the UK, Institute for Policy and Research

¹⁵ McKay and Winkelmann (2005) Migrant Workers on the East of England, East of England Development Agency

Although many migrant workers have good experiences of working in the UK, many others are being exploited in what the BBC regarded as being a kin to “sweat shop labour”¹⁶. Other organisations have not used such emotive language but do draw attention to exploitative employment practices that go on including

- Receiving less pay than English counterparts
- Being treated less favourably than English counterparts¹⁷
- Not having contracts of employment
- Not being provided with proper pay slips
- Illegal deductions from wages
- Breaches of working time regulations
- Denial of holidays
- Employers withholding passports¹⁸
- Being paid less than the minimum wage¹⁹

European Union research shows that complex immigration rules do mean that some migrant workers can be working illegally and some employers are happy to exploit this situation²⁰. Home Office²¹ and Department of Trade and Industry²² guidance is available on the Internet to help EU migrant workers work and reside in the UK within the law, though this is predominantly provided in English.

The language barrier also poses problems for workers. Collaborative working between the Health and Safety Executive and Trade Unions Congress has shown that migrant workers are missing out on important Health and Safety advice because the related training and information are almost

¹⁶ bbc.co.uk (10th February 2004)

¹⁷ McKay and Winkelmann (2005) *Migrant Workers on the East of England*, East of England Development Agency

¹⁸ CAB (2003), *Nowhere to Turn: CAB evidence on the exploitation of migrant workers*, London

¹⁹ McKay (2005) *Employment Rights and Migrant Workers*, Institute of Employment Rights Labour Migration and Employment Rights

²⁰ McKay (2005) *Employment Rights and Migrant Workers*, Institute of Employment Rights Labour Migration and Employment Rights

²¹ http://www.workingintheuk.gov.uk/working_in_the_uk/en/homepage/your_status/european_citizens.html?

²² <http://www.dti.gov.uk/employment/migrant-workers/index.html>

exclusively provided in English²³. Indeed, a piece of detailed research in this issue funded by the Health and Safety Executive is due to be published in the near future²⁴. To help address the need already identified the Health and Safety Executive have published guides in 24 different languages in the Internet²⁵.

Outside of the workplace difficulties include

- Problems accessing Health and other services²⁶
- Social isolation from family²⁷
- Living in overcrowded, substandard and expensive accommodation²⁸
- Lack of interaction with local community²⁹
- Competition or conflict with local community³⁰

Social isolation has been cited as one of the reasons why migrants are often proportionately over-represented in mental illness statistics. Indeed this research by The Royal College of Psychiatrists identifies 11 factors directly related to the migration experience that adversely affect people's mental health³¹. Interestingly difficult working or living conditions are not included in this list.

From a community safety perspective, it has been acknowledged that women and children from overseas countries are victims of human trafficking for labour, sexual or commercial exploitation – an activity that is linked with organised crime³². This has been identified as an area of

²³ HSE Press Release: E170:04 –(9th December 2004) Language barriers mean new dangers at work

²⁴ <http://www.workinglives.org/projects.html>

²⁵ <http://www.hse.gov.uk/workers/hse27.htm>

²⁶ McKay (2005) Employment Rights and Migrant Workers, Institute of Employment Rights Labour Migration and Employment Rights

²⁷ McKay and Winkelmann (2005) Migrant Workers on the East of England, East of England Development Agency

²⁸ CAB (2003), Nowhere to Turn: CAB evidence on the exploitation of migrant workers, London

²⁹ Barry Gardiner (2006) MP at the National Migrant Worker conference at Congress House, London, 9 May 2006

³⁰ Barry Gardiner (2006) MP at the National Migrant Worker conference at Congress House, London, 9 May 2006

³¹ Bhugra and Jones (2001) Migration and mental illness, *Advances in Psychiatric Treatment* (2001) 7: 216-222

³² <http://www.cre.gov.uk/default.aspx.locid-0hgnew0dc.htm>

concern for the Government³³ and a number of police operations have uncovered women of various nationalities being exploited in the sex industry³⁴.

REGIONAL THEMES

The Government Office of the South West has undertaken research with the Trades Union Congress about the situation of Migrant workers in this region. Unlike Somerset and Cornwall, North Somerset is not expressly mentioned in the resulting report³⁵. However, the report suggests that within the South West region the “migrant population is relatively small but there are pockets of concentration”. It suggests that the patterns of employment are slightly different to the national picture in so far as workers tend to be employed in the following sectors:

- Seasonal agriculture
- Tourism and hospitality
- Skilled workers in the public sector (teachers, health workers, etc.)
- Skilled workers in the private sector (IT specialists etc.)
- General labour (food and drink, construction, agriculture, etc.)
- Food and drink, agriculture, hospitality, sex trade

It notes that 4% of the working population in the region are migrant workers; 57.5% of them are of Polish nationality; and that 88% are aged between 18 and 34. The report also highlights that the workplace related issues identified at the national level are played out across the South West region

³³ <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200506/cmhansrd/cm050720/text/50720w20.htm>

³⁴ Kent Police (2006) Three People Jailed from People Smuggling, obtainable from http://www.kent.police.uk/News/Latest_News/People%20trafficking.html; Staffordshire Police (May 2006) Arrests in people trafficking operation, obtainable from http://www.staffordshire.police.uk/news/2006/05_may/25_arrests.htm; Merseyside Police, (March 2006) Operation Finchley arrests - people trafficking, obtainable from <http://www.merseyside.police.uk/html/news/news/march/kh10-03a-finchley.htm>; BBC news (February 2006) 13 held over people trafficking ,obtainable from <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/humber/4689786.stm>; Britton 2005 Sex slaves freed as police smash human trafficking operation, obtainable from <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml;jsessionid=0FP0G5RS2XNZFQFIQMGSFFWAVCBQWIV0?xml=/news/2005/10/01/nslave01.xml>

³⁵Sue Rees (2005) Migrant Working in the South West - Paper for information obtainable from http://www.gosw.gov.uk/gosw/docs/246139/250458/308602/SWRAF_14.6a_Migrant_workers.doc

and that skills training (including language) and accommodation are key issues. The South West Regional Development Agency is planning to address these key issues and is commissioning Plymouth University to analyse skills gaps in the food and drink industry; as well as considering the establishment of a regional employment agency network to promote good practice; reviewing the provision of vocational and language training; and working with housing providers and local authorities to tackle housing related problems³⁶.

LOCAL ISSUES

As yet there has been no formal research conducted within North Somerset to establish the size of its migrant worker population. The most recent and widespread survey of the population was in the form of the 2001 census. The census showed that 1.38% (2609 individuals) of the population within North Somerset identified themselves as being from a Black or visible minority and 1.17% (2389 individuals) identified themselves as 'white other' – a category that would include European Migrants. However, the way in which ethnic groups were classified were too general to give details of countries of origin or help to identify the needs of the diverse range of people within each category. Also, the census took place several years ago and the ethnic composition of the area has visibly changed since it was undertaken.

Collecting comprehensive data about the local migrant worker population was not possible in the time available for this scoping exercise, though would be achievable if a deeper study was commissioned over a longer period. This being said the information gathered does reveal themes that warrant further research information.

For instance, large employers monitor their workforce by ethnicity, but tend to use the categories recommended by the Commission of Racial Equality. These are the very same categories that were used in the 2001 census, and as mentioned above these categories are too general to help

³⁶ South West Regional Development Agency (2006) Board Paper Reference SWRDA (D6) 13

with a study such as this, therefore further research would need to focus specifically on European migrant groups.

Smaller employers were able to access more detailed information about their employees; however, responses from organisations were too few to give any accurate flavour of the numbers of migrant workers. For instance a questionnaire was sent out to the 142 care homes in North Somerset and the 23 replies indicated that 68 migrant workers were employed by responding homes. Also, information about two companies that are in transport identified another 42 migrant workers, a sample that is too small to be representative of the entire transport sector within this area, which includes the Royal Portbury Dock and Bristol International Airport.

Interestingly all of the England based employment agencies in North Somerset were contacted as part of this exercise, and they either declined to take part or denied that they employed migrant workers. This was an unexpected result, and would warrant further investigation given that anecdotal evidence suggests otherwise. For instance several migrant workers report having worked for agencies, and being told that if they are a woman they must work as a care assistance, and if they are a man then they must work as a cleaner – regardless of their skills or qualifications. One woman reported that she had heard the same story from so many other ethnic minorities new to the area the working as a care assistant or cleaner was like a rite of passage³⁷. The Hate Crime Officer reported being informed that employment agencies based abroad also supply workers to North Somerset, and that many are moved quickly around the country. Again more time was needed to find out who these agencies are and how many workers they supply, and to which sectors.

Although the responses were not able to clarify the number of migrant workers in North Somerset, they were able to give a flavour of the range of minority groups that migrant workers belong to. All of the data that was contributed to this exercise shows that the migrant worker population in this unitary authority area includes:

³⁷ Meeting of the Community Learning Network (2005) St Paul's Church Room

- Bulgarians
- Chinese
- Columbians
- Czechs
- Estonians
- Filipinos
- Ghanaians
- Indians
- Italians
- Latvians
- Lithuanians
- Mauritans
- Portuguese
- Polish
- Romanians
- Russians
- Slovenians
- South Africans
- Spanish
- Thais
- Zimbabweans

The responses were also able to suggest that the sectors in which migrant workers were employed, which are more closely aligned to the national picture rather than those identified within the regional level research. However, this project did not come into contact with the manufacturing companies, nor did it investigate the sex trade – these are therefore other areas that would benefit from further research. Indeed an investigation into the uptake of skilled migrant workers in both the public and private sectors would also address a gap in this study.

It was possible to collect some information about migrant workers' experiences of working and living in North Somerset. A small number of migrant workers that were known at the time of this scoping study were employed through a Polish agency and living in substandard accommodation that was provided with the job. Full market rent was being charged despite not having access to cooking or washing facilities; there were discrepancies with pay and holiday entitlement; entitlements to maternity leave and maternity pay were not honoured; and they were paid a lesser rate than their English counterparts. These people felt that if they complained the employers would simply replace them with another person from the agency. This being said, one had successfully claimed back unlawful deductions and maternity pay with the help of the Citizen's Advice Bureau. One of these workers was able to speak good English, the others were keen to improve their limited English but were having difficulties accessing classes because they were working long hours in a semi-rural area and were unable to drive. One was a qualified pharmacist, now working as a cleaner because of the relatively high cost of registering to practice in the UK. These people were being asked to waive the protection of the working time regulations, however that was not always seen as a negative, with some being happy to increase their income in this way.

A person who provides accommodation for migrant workers under a contract with one of the Polish agencies stated that the number of workers staying with him varies, and that people are moved on very quickly. His neighbour also provides accommodation, though for different nationalities. He noted that on occasions there has been tension between different ethnic groups, but as people were moved on quickly it tended not to develop into something more serious. It was thought that these people were entirely dependant upon their employment agencies, their employers or each other for information about local services, and that they did not have good English language skills. It was a person in this very situation that came forward to report a serious crime despite being warned against approaching the police or local authority – having been told that the police and local authority were being paid off by the employer/agent.

Not all workers in North Somerset are agency workers: some are employed directly by private employers. A business that has a good relationship with local public authorities stated that the

migrant workers employed by them are settling in the area. It once used to provide accommodation for them, but they have tended to move into places of their own. Improved business efficiency has been noted, and attributed to the sound work ethic of those employed.

Another business has employed people from two ethnic groups. There are tensions between the groups that are partially due to historical animosity, and exacerbated by job segregation that has inadvertently developed. This segregation has developed because one group has better standards of English and could be employed in managerial positions whereas the other group were employed in manual work. The manual workers tend to be outside, and the lack of clothing to protect them from the weather compounds the situation. Local residents have noticed practices that lead them to believe that the employer pays part of the wages as vouchers for the employer's shop, which sells food at an inflated price.

There are several landlords and some agencies across North Somerset who rent out accommodation to migrant workers, and local residents in the North have observed that there can be "*quite a few people living in each house*". For instance a commuter on her way to work in the south of the district often notices large numbers of what are thought to be migrant workers coming out of a house and into a minibus, with others getting out of the minibus and going into the house. The numbers involved are usual given the size of house, giving rise to suspicions that this house is overcrowded and that 'hot bedding' – where beds are shared by workers on opposing shifts – is occurring.

Whilst precise details were not provided, the police noted that it has been dealing with some young men thought to be migrant workers mainly for alcohol related incidents. It seems likely that alcohol is being used to relieve stresses associated with long working hours, returning to overcrowded and substandard housing and being socially isolated with limited leisure opportunities. Psychiatric services have noticed an increase in the numbers of migrant workers being treated for stress-related conditions over recent years. Thus poor living and working conditions if left untouched are likely to have a knock on effect for health services and policing.

As regards access to services, again data was patchy because large service providers either do not yet systematically gather formal ethnic data, or do not collect data that is sufficiently specific. Customer facing staff do however have a feel for who the customers are, with libraries been a well used service – be this to use the computers or request books in other languages. English language courses are also popular, however, few of the people who enrol are able to continue attending the classes because of work commitments. Other services seem to be accessed less often if at all. The reasons for this are many and include a cultural pride in being independent and not wanting to ‘take’ from the host country; language barriers; mistrust of public authorities because of past experiences of oppressive governments; not knowing what help is available; not knowing what help they are entitled to; finding help outside the unitary authority area.

Smaller organisations such as the Citizens Advice Bureau, Somerset Racial Equality Council and the Ethnic Minority Achievement Service are able to access this type of information more readily. The Citizens Advice Bureau is thought to be seen as ‘neutral territory’ and a credible place to get help – and this is reflected in its service user statistics. Somerset Racial Equality Council’s new ‘BME Forum project’ has been approached in relation to helping four migrant workers access local services and have an opportunity to participate in the local community. The team leader of the Ethnic Minority Achievement Service has also noticed an increase this year in schools asking for help to meet the needs of children from migrant worker families. This suggests that the perception of migrant workers being single men is not necessarily accurate.

To reinforce that there is a need to look past the “*single adventuresome male migrant*” stereotype in North Somerset is the story of the female migrant worker who became pregnant whilst living in the area. By becoming pregnant out of wedlock she was disowned by her peers in England, rejected by her family in her country of origin, lost her job and became so desperate that she was suicidal. This woman did not attempt to access any mainstream service for help – preferring instead to turn to an individual from outside the area that she had heard, through word of mouth, would be able to help.

Community tension is starting to be noticed in relation to access to services. This has been low key at present and associated with increased waiting times where there is an increased uptake of services.

Some local media are also starting to find migrant workers newsworthy, but the current line of inquiry that has been taken suggests that the reporting is likely to exacerbate the community tension that is starting to emerge. Indeed this report has been awaited by the media in the hope that it will reveal how much is spent on educating children of migrant worker families – an issue that was not in the remit of this study.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Although the local information regarding the North Somerset migrant worker population was patchy, this scoping exercise generated a lot of interest across the public, private and voluntary sectors and provided many leads for later work.

The information that was available showed that a proportion of the migrant workers population is transient, however, others are more settled – hence we are now starting to see families settle in other areas: however, these changes are only starting to be noticed in North Somerset, whereas areas such as the rural area in the East of England have been undergoing the process of change for several years. This is significant because research in other areas is finding that although employers value the labour of migrant workers, a segregated society is emerging where these workers can find themselves

Involved in discriminatory and illegal employment practices

Not being able to access essential services

Being socially isolated

Living in substandard and dangerous accommodation

Having limited opportunities to participate in local communities

Being in conflict with the local community

And find themselves in a weak position to address the problems.

The information that is starting to emerge in North Somerset suggests that these very issues are also now occurring within this local authority area. As such North Somerset has the opportunity to learn from the experiences elsewhere and start to diffuse the tensions that are building by tackling the key underlying problems that are arising. The national and local picture suggest that those key problems are

Finding employment

Improving conditions of employment

Housing

Access to services

Flexible opportunities to learn English

Opportunities to improve quality of leisure time

Each of these themes lend themselves to a practical, action based/problem solving approach. Given the level of interest shown and expertise available among public, private, voluntary organisations and migrant workers there would be clear advantages in engaging representatives across sector as well as the community through an event such as a workshop or sequence of multidisciplinary meetings where discussions are focussed around these themes. Such an approach would provide an opportunity for information about the migrant worker population in the local area to be shared with a wider audience; raise awareness of helpful initiatives that are already in place that can contribute to solving the problems; as well as plan activities to address the gaps.

APPENDIX 1: SOURCES APPROACHED

All of the organisations and groups listed below were contacted by this project, which was looking to determine the numbers, nationalities and employment sector of migrant workers in North Somerset. Not all organisations replied.

Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Care Trust

Citizens Advice Bureaux

Employment agencies

Equalities South West

Ethnic Minority Achievement Service

First Bus

Lidl's Warehouse

Local Churches

Government Office of the South West

Multi-Cultural Learning Network

North Somerset Council

Nursing and residential homes

Polish Consul

Somerset Racial Equality Council

Trade Unions

Weston College

Weston Super Mare hospital